



TALES FROM THE CRYPT

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CAST



CHRISTOPHER LEE



MICHAEL C. HALL



PETER ONORATI

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEY, HEY! WELCOME, YOU DEAR LITTLE HORRID MONSTERS, TO MY NEW TERROR-TITLE! E.C.'S BRUESOME THREESOME IS NOW A REVULGING FOURSOME, AS 'THE CRYPT OF TERROR' JOINS WITH 'THE VAULT OF HORROR', 'THE HAUNT OF FEAR', AND 'TALES FROM THE CRYPT' TO BRING YOU HEAPING HELPFULS OF HORROR IN THE GUT-IMITATED E.C. TRADITION. I TRUST YOU'LL BE AMPLY SICKENED BY THIS LATEST COLLECTION OF GADDEROUS GAYOTIMOS, AS IF NOW, ALL IS AT PEACE AT THE E.C. OFFICE, BUT I EXPECT TROUBLE WITH THE VAULT-KEEPER AND THE OLD WITCH REALIZES THAT I NOW HAVE TWO MUCH-BAD TO THEIR ONE! OH, WELL, THERE'S NO USE SLAUGHTERING YOUR CHILDREN BEFORE YOU COME TO THE BURNED BRIDGES. SO, COME INTO THE CRYPT OF TERROR... AND YOUR MOST IN HORROR AND HEAVEN. YOUR CRYPT-KEEPER WILL LAUNCH MY NEW HAUSEATING NEWSPRINT-MARGOTIC WITH THE BLOOD-CORULINE SPINE-FINDLING FLEP-FARN' I CALL.

UPON REFLECTION



CHESTER WAYNE TRUCKED TREMBOLUSLY ALONG THE BACKROAD ROAD LEADING FROM PLAINSVILLE. HIS HAND-POWERED RIFLE WAS READY, HIS NERVOUS FINGER ON THE TRIGGER. ABOVE, A FULL MOON SHED A PALE LIGHT ON THE COUNTRYSIDE, SILHOUETTING EACH SHADY BUSH INTO AN OBNOXIOUS CROUCHING FORM. AROUND HIM, EACH FAINT WHISPER OF WIND BURNED "SO BACK! SO BACK!"...



I SPOKE OVER MAMIE'S BAKED BONES I'D GET THE ONE WHO DID IT TO HER. I'VE GOT TO KEEP TRYING! I'VE GOT TO!...

THINKING OF MAMIE MADE CHESTER MAD AND DROVE HIM ON. HE WAS ROUNDING A TURN WHEN HE SAW IT NOT FORTY FEET AHEAD. HE STOPPED ABRUPTLY AND CALLED OUT TO THE BLACK-CLADDED HILL IN THE SHALLOW ROAD-SIDE DITCH...



WHO, WHO'S THERE?

THE STARTLED CREATURE TURNED FROM ITS HUMAN PREY A CLAMMY SWEAT BROKE OUT ON CHESTER WHEN HE SAW THE HUNNY FACE, THE BLOOD DRIPPING FROM ITS LIPS AND CHIN...



BAH! OH, LORD...

THE WEREWOLF BARED ITS FANGS AT THE HUNTER AND SMARLED. CHESTER DROPPED TO ONE KNEE, THREW THE RIFLE TO HIS SHOULDER AND SQUEEZED THE TRIGGER. A HOLLOW-WOODED BOSS SHRIEKED ACROSS THE ROAD AFTER THE NOW-FLEEING BEAST...



HIT HIM! FOR MAMIE! RIP HIM OPEN!

HE WAS MUMM WITH HORROR, HALF-BLIND WITH RAGE AS HE BLASTED AWAY AT THE DISAPPEARING MONSTER TILL THE MAGAZINE WAS EMPTY AND THE HAMMER CLICKED DEAD ON THE EMPTY RIFLE CHAMBER.



MISSED HIM! SOB... MAMIE! I SOB... MISSED...

LOATH TO LOOK UPON THE SORT REMAINS THAT LAY IN THE DITCH, CHESTER WAS NEVERTHELESS DRAWN TOWARD THEM AS THOUGH BY SOME MAGNET OF MOROSITY. HE APPROACHED ON TREMBLING LEGS... LOOKED... THEN RECOILED IN HORROR AT THE SIGHT OF BARE BONE AND RAW, HALF-EATEN FLESH...



OH SOB!

A GREAT VICIOUS SICKNESS WRENCHED AT CHESTER'S INNARDS... AND HE TURNED, RETCHING, AND RAN THE WHOLE WAY BACK TO PLAINSVILLE...



THE MEN IN HARLEY'S TAVERN LEAPED TO THEIR FEET AS CHESTER BURST THROUGH THE DOOR, HEADED FOR THE BAR. THEY SAW THE RIFLE AND THE LOOK ON HIS FACE AND THEY DREW.

WHO... WHO WAS THAT? QUICK, FRANK! POUR ME SOMETHIN' STRAIGHT!



CHESTER TOSSED OFF A DOUBLE BOURBON... AND WHILE IT WAS STILL BURNING DOWN, HE PANTED OUT THE TERRIBLE DETAILS OF HIS HARBORING EXPERIENCE...

GOD, MAN! TELL US WHO THAT WAS! IT WAS! WE'VE ALL GOT FAMILIES!



A FARMER HAD A PLACE THREE MILES OUT... BEEN HERE IN TOWN... NICE RIF. GUY. HE'S GONNA BE QUITE A LONG, LONG TIME NOW... LIKE MY MAMIE!

AT FIRST THE MEN EXCHANGED GUILTY GLANCES OF RELIEF, BUT AFTER A FEW MOMENTS OF BROODING SILENCE, PAUL MYERS CLIMBED ONTO A TABLE AND SHOUTED...

THAT MAKES FIVE VICTIMS IN AS MANY MONTHS... AND WHY? AIN'T WE PAYIN' FOR PROTECTION IN THIS ROTTEN TOWN? ALL WE GET FROM MAYOR HARBOR IS PROMISES! DO WE WANT TILL THAT WEREWOLF GRABS SOMEONE CLOSE TO US BEFORE WE MAKE HARBOR DO SOMETHIN'??



IT'S ALREADY GOT SOMEONE CLOSE TO ME, PAUL! MY WIFE, MAMIE!



THAT OWES YOU MORE RIGHT TO TELL THE MAYOR OFF, CHEST. YOU'LL LEAD THE WAY AND WE'LL BACK YOU UP!

FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER, MAYOR HARBOR WAS AWAKENED BY SHOUTS OF HIS NAME. HE LEANED UNNERSALLY FROM THE BEDROOM WINDOW OF HIS COLONIAL HOME AND LOOKED DOWN AT THE ANGRY CROWD BELOW.

PLEASE, GENTLEMEN! THEN COME MY WIFE IS ASLEEP! ON DOWN, MAYOR!



SOON, HIS PORTLY PANAMA-CLAD FIGURE WHIPPED IN A SLAND ROSE, THE DISMAILED MAYOR OF PLAINSVILLE STOOD BEFORE HIS TOWN-PEOPLE, LISTENING TO THE FRIGHTFUL NEWS...

TERRIBLE! TERRIBLE! I'LL SEND OFFICIAL CONDOLENCES TO HIS WIDOW IN THE MORN...



A PRT LOT OF SODA THAT'LL DO, MAYOR? WHAT ABOUT THE PROTECTION YOU PROMISED US?



WHAT CAN I DO, MR. WAYNE? FOR ONE THING, THIS FIERCE ATTACK TOOK PLACE OUTSIDE OF TOWN... BEYOND MY JURISDICTION!

MY WIFE'S BODY WAS RANDED RIGHT HERE ON THE STREETS OF PLAINSVILLE!



WE WANT MORE THAN WORDS, MAYOR!

WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO ABOUT IT, HARBOR?

MAJOR HANSON TRIED TO PACIFY THE ROILING MOB...

PLEASE, GENTLE-
MEN! NOW, MR.
WAYNE, YOU SAY
YOU FIRED SEVERAL
SILVER BULLETS
AT THE WEREWOLF.
THEY WERE SILVER
BULLETS, OF COURSE!

SENSE? I
DON'T GET
YOU, MAJOR.
I USED NOU-
LOW-ROUSE
IT'S... LEAD.
NOT SILVER.
THEY'RE LIKE
GUM-DUMS...

MAJOR HANSON WAS VERY ADEPT AT SHIFTING THE PRESSURE FROM HIMSELF...

WELL, I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN
SOMEONE WOULD GO OFF HALF-
COCKED! MY DEAR MR. WAYNE...
IF YOU'VE TAKEN THE TROUBLE
TO HEAD UP ON WEREWOLVES, AS
I HAVE, YOU'D KNOW THAT ONLY
A SILVER BULLET CAN KILL A
WEREWOLF!

THE CROWD FELL SILENT WITH EMBARRASSMENT, FOR NO MAN WISHED TO ADMIT IGNORANCE TO HIS NEIGHBOR. MAJOR HANSON SMILED PATRONIZINGLY...

I'LL WELCOME ANYONE OF YOU
TO MY LIBRARY WHO'D CARE TO
INFORM HIMSELF ON THE HABITS
OF THE LYCANTHROPE. MEAN-
WHILE, MY FELLOW CITIZENS, BE
CALM AND... GOOD-NIGHT...

THE MAJOR WENT BACK INTO HIS STately HOME, THE CROWD DISPERSED, AND CHESTER WAYNE JOINED PAUL MYERS AND CHUCK BOGGS IN A HILARIOUS SESSION AT MARLEY'S TAVERN...

THERE NEVER WAS A MAN BETTER AT
BOURMING OUT OF A HOT SPOT THAN
MAJOR HANSON!

WE'RE NO BETTER
OFF THAN BEFORE
WE CALLED ON HIM!

CHESTER WAYNE GRIMACED...

YES, WE ARE! WE HAVE TIME... A WHOLE
MONTH BEFORE THE NEXT FULL MOON. WE
CAN START MELTING DOWN SILVER COMBS
FOR BULLETS! WE CAN BE READY THE
NEXT TIME THAT WEREWOLF SHOWS HIMSELF...

SO MOST OF THE PEOPLE OF PLAINSVILLE LIVED IN DREAD OF THE COMING FULL MOON... AND THE NIGHT IT ARRIVED, EVERYONE STAYED BEHIND LOCKED DOORS AND SHUTTERED WINDOWS. ONLY CLARA HANSON, THE MAJOR'S WIFE, VENTURED OUT TO VISIT HER AGED AND AILING MOTHER...

I'VE GOT TO BE FUNKING ALONG, MAMA
ELWOOD WILL BE WORRYING ABOUT
ME! PROMISE YOU'LL TAKE IT EASY...

WHAT ELSE
COULD I DO
IN THIS
WHEELCHAIR,
CLARA?

IT WAS JUST THREE SHORT BLOCKS FROM HER MOTHER'S HOME TO THE HANSON HOME. CLARA WALKED UNFRAID, UNTIL SHE SAW THE FULL YELLOW MOON HANGING HIGH ABOVE THE VILLAGE SQUARE...

GULP... THANK HEAVENS IT'S
NOT FAT!

CLARA HANSON HURRIED HER STEPS, FINDING SOME LITTLE COMFORT AS THE GRIND CLINKING OF HER HEELS ALONG THE CEMENTED SIDEWALK KEPT TIME WITH THE RAPID BEATING OF HER RACING HEART. SHE'D REACHED THE SQUARE, ONLY ONE BLOCK FROM HOME, WHEN SHE HEARD THE TERRIFYING TRAIL. SHE SPUN AROUND, HER BLOOD TURNING TO ICE IN HER VEINS...



HER ATTEMPTED SCREAM CAME FORTH AS NO MORE THAN AN ANATHEMATIC WHEELING SCREAM, THE FLESH-STAVED BEAST SPRANG... BINKING ITS BLEAMING FANGS INTO HER THROBBING THROAT... RIPPING IT OPEN... FOUNTAINING THE BLOOD OVER ITS HAIRY FACE... INTO ITS RED BOILING EYES...



WHILE JUST ACROSS THE SQUARE, IN HARLEY'S TAVERN, CHESTER BAYNE AND PAUL MYERS WERE FORTIFYING THEMSELVES AT THE BAR.



SHEEPISHLY, THEY KICKED UP THEIR SILVER-BULLET-LOADED CANNONS AND WALKED FROM THE TAVERN, ACROSS THE SQUARE. THEY GOT NO FURTHER THAN WHERE THE SHATTERED SKELETON OF CLARA HANSON LAY IN A POOL OF COAGULATING BLOOD, HER BLOOD SOAKED CLOTHES STREWN ABOUT...



MAYOR HANSON WAS PLAINLY TROUBLED WHEN HE FACED THE TWO WHITE-FACED MEN ACROSS HIS THRESHOLD...



THE MAYOR RECOGNIZED HIS WIFE'S CLOTHES AT ONCE. WITH MUCH LOUD BAILING AND ANGUISHED SOBBS, HE FELL ACROSS HER FLESH-STRIPPED BONES...

CLARA SOB... MY CLARA

ALL THAT CARRYING ON WON'T HELP HER NOW...

LEAVE HIM ALONE, PAUL!



AT LAST THE MAYOR AROSE AND HIS TEAR-REDDENED EYES BLAZED

THAT FILTHY PILE THING! I'LL GET EVERY ABLE-BODIED MAN IN THIS TOWN AFTER IT!

THIS TIME IT'S YOUR WIFE, AND THE SHOE'S ON THE OTHER FOOT!

LAF OFF, WILL YOU, PAUL!



EVERY MAN WILL BE ARMED! THERE'LL BE SILVER BULLETS FOR ALL! A VIGILANTE COMMITTEE, THAT'S WHAT WE'LL HAVE! WE'LL DIVIDE INTO GROUPS... COME THE COUNTRYBOY! COME THE NEXT FULL MOON WE'LL BE WAITING!



WITHIN TWENTY-EIGHT DAYS, EVERY CAPABLE MAN IN PLAINS-VILLE HAD RECEIVED A RIFLE AND FIVE SILVER BULLETS. EVERYONE HAD PRACTICED WITH MOVING TARGETS. EVERYONE WAS READY. THE AFTERNOON BEFORE THE NIGHT OF THE FULL MOON THE MEN THROBLED BEFORE MAYOR HANSON'S MARCH.

WE'LL START NOW. IN GROUPS OF SIX... IN DAYLIGHT... SO WE CAN ADMIRAL OURSELVES WITH EACH AREA! NOW, REMEMBER



...STAY CLOSE TOGETHER AND MAKE SURE OF WHAT YOU'RE SHOOTING AT! WHEN YOU SEE SOMETHING MOVE, MAKE CERTAIN IT ISN'T ONE OF YOUR OWN PARTY. PAR-OF! ONE MAN USE A LIGHT WHILE THE OTHER MAN DOES THE SHOOTING! WE DON'T WANT ANY INNOCENT PEOPLE KILLED!



IT WAS TWILIGHT WHEN MAJOR HANSON, WEARING A RED DUDE SHOOTING JACKET AND SCARLET HUNTER'S CAP, CLIMBED FROM HIS CAR AT THE REMEDIOUS SPOT FOR HIS GROUP. CHESTER BAYNE GRINNED...

WHEE, THE FANCY GUYFIT ON ME HONOR, PAUL. YOU COULD SEE IT IN A COAL MINE AT MIDNIGHT.

HUNTING IN THE DARK IS A DANGEROUS BUSINESS, MR. BAYNE. I'D RATHER BE SAFE THAN SORRY.



WHEN DARKNESS CAME, THE MEN WERE ALERT AND ALERT! MATT STEVENS, WITH HIS GROUP IN TOWN, SAW A SUSPICIOUS FIGURE, SCREAMED OUT AFTER IT, AND BEGAN SHOOTING...

CUT THAT OUT, MATT! THE MAJOR SAID TO MAKE SURE WHAT YOU'RE SHOOTING AT!



LUCKILY, MATTHEW'S SHOTS WERE WILD. THE FIGURE TURNED OUT TO BE A FAMILIAR DRUNK THEY ALL KNEW WELL...

WELL, WHAT'S YOU RUN FOR IF YOU AREN'T THE WEREWOLF?

I AMN'T THE WEREWOLF! I'M SOBERED I'M GONNA BE A BITTIN' DRUNK WHEN SOMEONE OPEN UP ON ME NEXT MORNIN'!



MEANWHILE, MAYOR HANSON AND HIS PARTY'D SURROUNDED A STRANGE OLD WOMAN WALKING ALONG A LONELY DARK ROAD...

LADY, YOU'RE TAKING A CHANCE BEING OUT TONIGHT! BETTER LET US SEE YOU HOME!

I DON'T NEED THEE HOME! I AMN'T SLEEPY!



PAUL MYERS STUDIED THE OLD LADY.

HOLD ON, MAYOR! WHO SAYS THE WEREWOLF'S GOT TO BE A MAN? I'VE SEEN THIS GUYER CAME AROUND I NEVER LINED HER LOOKS!

MAYBE YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING THERE, MYERS. I HADN'T THOUGHT OF A FEMALE WEREWOLF!



MAYOR HANSON AND PAUL MYERS REVEALED THEIR THEORY TO THE OTHERS OF THEIR PARTY...

WELL, NOW CAN WE TELL IF SHE IS THE WEREWOLF?

WE'LL TAKE HER BACK TO MY PLACE! I HAVE THAT BOOK! IT TELLS HOW TO RECOGNIZE A WEREWOLF... EVEN IN HUMAN FORM!



CHET WAYNE BRANCHED HIS RIFLE AND SCOOPED...

AN BUTS TO YOUR BOOK, MAYOR. IN LESS THAN TWENTY MINUTES, THE MOON WILL BE FULL. THEN, IF THE OLD LADY TURNS OUT TO BE WHAT WE'RE AFTER, WE LET HER HAVE IT!

...AND IF SHE DOESN'T, THEN WE'VE WASTED VALUABLE TIME... PERHAPS EVEN LET THE REAL WEREWOLF ESCAPE.



THEY MADE THEIR WAY BACK TO THE MAYOR'S CAR. THE OLD LADY POUNED THEM AS THEY TRIED TO PUSH HER IN. SHE EVEN BIT PAUL'S HAND...

OWIE! THE DIRTY BITCH!

I AMN'T BOW! YOU CAN'T MAKE ME DO!



PAUL SOLVED THE PROBLEM. HE BRUNG HIS RIFLE - BUTT, CLOUTING THE OLD WOMAN ACROSS THE SIDE OF HER HEAD.

THIS... THIS IS KIDNAPPING! AFTER ALL, WE STILL HAVE NO PROOF! YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE HIT HER...

AH, CLIMB OFF MY BACK, MAYOR! AND STEP ON IT! SHE'S OUT COLD!



IT TOOK HIM OVER FIFTEEN MINUTES TO REACH THE MAYOR'S HOUSE IN TOWN. BY THAT TIME, THE OLD MAN HAD PERISHED.



"I'LL GET THE BOOK AND COME RIGHT OUT! HOLD HER!"

"I STILL THINK YOU'RE CRAZY, HARRISON! IN LESS THAN THREE MINUTES THE MOON WILL BE FULL... AND THEN WE'LL KNOW FOR SURE!"

MAYOR HARRISON HURRIED INTO THE HOUSE, STUMBLING DOWN THE ONLY LIT HALL TO THE DARK LIBRARY. HE STOPPED SUDDENLY AS HE REACHED THE DOOR... AND STARED AT THE GLEAMING EYES BURNING IN THE BLACKNESS BEYOND.



MAYOR HARRISON MOVED FORWARD SLOWLY, HIS RIFLE READY. THEN, ALL AT ONCE, HE SAW IT... THE BARRY FACE... THE GLEAMING FANGS FLASHING FROM BEHIND THE SHARLING CRUEL MOUTH. HE SCREAMED...



HE FIRED, POINT-BLANK, AGAIN AND AGAIN. THE VILE FEROCIOUS BEAST JUST STOOD THERE... SHARLING AT HIM.



OUTSIDE, THE MEN HEARD THE SHOTS AND TORE FOR THE HOUSE... THE MAYOR STUMBLED TO THE LIBRARY LIGHT SWITCH, FLICKING IT ON. HE SMILED AS THE BLOW FLOODED THE ROOM.



MAYOR ELWOOD HARRISON STOOD BEFORE THE FULL-LENGTH LIBRARY MIRROR, SHARLING AND SHRIeking, STARING HORRIFICALLY AT THE BULLET HOLTS HE'D MADE WHEN HE'D SHOT AT HIS OWN REFLECTION.



AND THAT'S THE FIRST SCREAM-STORY IN MY NEW PUTRID PERIODICAL, PERIOD. NATURALLY, THEY SHOT MAYOR WEREWOLF AFTER THAT. IN FACT THEY PUMPED HIM SO FULL OF SILVER BULLETS, HE HAD TO BE LOWERED INTO HIS GRAVE WITH A DERRICK! THEN A COUPLE OF CRAVE-BORERS HEARD ABOUT THE SILVER... AND BUT THAT'S



THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! AND NOW THAT C.R. HAS CURLED YOUR ARTERIAL BLOOD, IT'S TIME FOR YOUR HOST IN THE VAULT OF HORROR, THE VAULT-KEEPER... NAMELY, ME... TO ENTERTAIN YOU WITH A SPINE-FINGLING, NAUSEATING NOVELETTE FROM MY CREEP COLLECTION. LET'S BEGIN! OH... LET'S NOT BEGIN YET! THIS IS A GOOD STORY ONE! IT'S CALLED...

BLIND ALLEYS

THE "HOME" WAS OLD AND PAINT-STARVED AND DRAFTY AND BADLY IN NEED OF REPAIR... THE ROOF LEAKED AND THE WINDOWS RATTLED AND WERE COVERED WITH YEARS OF DUST AND GRIME... THE INMATES OF THE HOME WALKED GRIM-FACED AND SILENT THROUGH CRACKED PLASTER HALLS, OR SAT IN DIMMY ROOMS ON CRAWLING BEES. THEY SHIVERED IN THE COLD WHEN WINTER CAME... WHEN THERE WAS NO STEAM TO WARM THE RUSTED RADIATORS...



...AND THEY SHIVERED IN THE HEAT WHEN SUMMER BURNED... WHEN LONG-BROKEN FANS LAY TOLD AND UNREPAIRED AND INABLE TO WAFT A BREATH OF COOL... THE RELIEF...



BUT THEY COULD NOT SEE THE PAINT-PEELED WALLS...THE DIRT CLOAKED WINDOWS...THE DUSTY AND COB-WEBBED HALLS OF THIS, THEIR HOME...THESE INMATES, THEY COULD NOT SEE THE ROACHES AND THE RATS SCAMPERING ACROSS THE UNWASHED FLOORS...



...AS THIS WAS A "HOME" FOR THE BLIND...FOR WRETCHED SOULS WHO LIVED IN WORLDS OF DARKNESS...WHO STARED WITH UNSEEING EYES AT THE MISERY AROUND THEM...AND YET *KNOW* AND *HATED* ALL OF IT...



FOR THE LOSS OF *ONE* SENSE ONLY TEMPS TO SHARPEN THE OTHERS...TO TUNE THEM MORE FINELY...TO MAKE THEM MORE *ACUTE*...THE INMATES *KNOW* BECAUSE THEY COULD TASTE...AND TOUCH...AND SMELL AND HEAR, THEY COULD TASTE THE SPOILED AND ROTTED FOOD PLACED BEFORE THEM AT MEALTIMES.



THEY COULD TOUCH THE STICKY, FILMY GOBBERS...THE DUST LAYERS COVERING EVERYTHING...



THEY COULD SMELL THE POUL DOORS OF MILDEW AND FAULTY PLUMBING AND POOR SANITATION AND NEGLECT...



THEY COULD HEAR THE RATS SCAMPERING AND THE ROACHES CRAWLING AND THE TERMITES BURNING AND THE LICE AND RED-BUGS AND FLIES AND A THOUSAND OTHER CREATURES OF FILTH THAT MOVED.



AND THEY COULD HEAR *OTHER* CREATURES TOO...*OTHER* CREATURES OF FILTH THAT MOVED. THEY COULD HEAR MR. SPENCER, THE HOME'S DIRECTOR, IN HIS OFFICE-APARTMENT DOWNSTAIRS, ENTERTAINING HIS LATEST LADY-FRIEND WITH THE MONEY HE'D SAVED ON THEM...THE INMATES...



THEY COULD HEAR HIS ALMOST MIMICRAL LAUGHTER AND THE CLINKING OF CHAMPAGNE GLASSES. THEY COULD SMELL THE MOUTH-WATERING GOSSES OF THE LATEEN SUPPER HE WAS ENJOYING, AND THEY COULD SEE, IN THEIR MINDS' EYES, THE LUXURIES WITH WHICH HE'D SELFISHLY SURROUNDED HIMSELF AT THEIR EXPENSE...



YES, SUMNER BRUNWALD HAD **INDEED** SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH LUXURIES...PAID FOR WITH THE **ALLOT-MENTS** GIVEN HIM FOR EACH BLIND INMATE. WHO **PAINTED PLASTER DREAMY HALLS** THAT THEY'D NEVER **SEE**, WHEN **HE COULD HAVE AN AIR-CONDITIONER** FOR THOSE **BLISTERING SUMMER DAYS**...



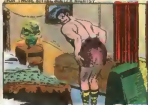
WHY LIVE THESE POOR MISERABLE BLIND FOOLS **BEAUTY** IF THEY COULD NOT **APPRECIATE** BEAUTY? SUMNER BRUNWALD'S **FELT** THAT **WHY** SO HE'D **SKIPPED** ON THE INMATES...**CUT CORNERS HERE... DENIED THERE...** AND WITH THE **SURPLUS**, HE'D **SUPPLIED** HIMSELF WITH BEAUTY...



FINE FURNITURE...GOOD BOOKS... PLUSH RUGS...EXPENSIVE DRAPES... AN OCCASIONAL EVENING OF **FEMALE COMPANIONSHIP**...THEY WERE **ALL** SUMNER'S TO ENJOY. HE'D EVEN **BOUGHT** A **DOG**...A **VICIOUS** **DOG**...HE'D HAD A **GOOD REASON**...



WHY LAUNDRY SHEETS AND BLANKETS AND **CLOTHES** OF **DIRT-SMARS** AND **SWEAT-STAINS** THAT THEY'D NEVER **SEE** WHEN HE COULD HAVE A **HEATER** FOR THOSE **BITING WINTER NIGHTS**...



FOR SUMNER KNEW THAT **ANOTHER** **SENSE** HAD **REPLACED** THE INMATES' **SENSE** OF **SMELL**...A **DEEP-SEATED** **SENSE**...**AND** **EVERY** **DAY**, HE'D **SEEN** IT IN THEIR **REBELLIOUS** **BLIND EYES**, IN THEIR **SILENT** **GRIM** **ACES**. HE'D **SEEN** THEM **SPOTTING** **HATE** SO HE'D **BOUGHT** THE **DOG** FOR **PROTECTION**...



AND **WITH** THE **DOG** **AT** HIS **SIDE**, SUMNER'D **TALKED-SELF-CONFIDENTLY** **BEFORE** THEM, **KNOWING** THAT HIS **SIGHT** AND THE **DOG'S** **STRENGTH** WOULD **KEEP** HIM **FROM** **HARM**...



AND **SO**, HE'D **BEEN** **ABLE** **TO** **CONTINUE** **TO** **ENJOY** HIS **FIERCE** **LITTLE** **ANIMENTS**...**LIKE** **TRIPPING** **HELP-LESS** **UNSUSPECTING** **INMATES** AS THEY'D **TOTTER** **BLINDLY** **BY** HIM...
 (A speech bubble from the man in the blue suit says: "GOOPNY")



...OR REMOVING SOMETHING THAT
THEY'D COME TO KNOW WAS THERE
AND COUNTED ON...



...OR ADDING SOMETHING NEW...



...OR BEING JUST NEAR...



YES, SUMNER'S **ABUSED** HIMSELF WITH HIS CHARGES
INABILITY TO SEE HE'D BEEN **SABOTAGING** WITH HIS
TORTURES. AND HE'D **BROWN PAT** ON HIS DENIALS.
AND HIS CHARGES HAD SAT IN THEIR WORLD OF DARK-
NESS AND **WAITED**. LISTENING.



...AND TONIGHT, THEIR OPPORTUNITY CAME...



LISTENING FOR THEIR **APPROXIMATE**
YOU STAY OUT THERE TILL SUMNER
IS THROUGH!



...SO THEY LURED THE DOG DOWN INTO THE OLD MUSTY CELLAR
OF THE HOME WITH SOME MEAT-SCRAPS THEY'D SAVED FROM
THEIR SCANT MEALS...



AND THEN THEY WAITED. THEY WAITED FOR SUMMER'S FRIENDS OF THE EVENING TO LEAVE. . .

THEY WAITED FOR SUMMER TO MISS HIS BOB. . .

...AND THEN THEY STRUCK! BLINDLY, UNSEEING... THEY SURROUNDED THEIR HATED ENEMY. . .



...AND DRAGGED HIM TO THE CELLAR TOO...TO ANOTHER WAITING CUBICLE. . .

BUT SUMMER'S ONLY ANSWER WAS THE SOFT WHINE OF THE BOB IN THE ADJOINING CUBICLE. . .



THEN THEY BEGAN TO WORK. THEY DRAGGED OUT OLD CHIMNEYS AND RUSTY NAILS AND LONG-LOST BARK. . .

AND THEY WENT THROUGH THE HOME AND CUT AND RIPPED AND CHOPPED THE LUMBER THEY NEEDED. . .



GUNNER LISTENED TO THE HAMMERING COMING THROUGH THE CELLAR. HE LISTENED TO THEIR SCOWLS AND CHATTER, AND HE WONDERED...



WHAT ARE THEY DOING? WHAT ARE THEY MAKING?

AND HE LISTENED AS THE NIGHT PASSED AND DAWN CAME, AND THE DOG IN THE CUBICLE NEXT DOOR GREW HUNGRY AND PACED AND GROVLED AND SCRATCHED AS ITS STOMACH GINNED...



FEED BRUTUS, YOU FOOLS! HE'LL GET WILD IF YOU DON'T! HE'LL BE DANGEROUS!

WE KNOW, MR. ORIGINAL!

THE DAY PASSED AND NIGHT CAME AGAIN. GUNNER'S OWN STOMACH ACHED WITH HUNGER, AND STILL THEY HAMMERED AND SAWED AND LAUGHED AND TALKED...



WHAT ARE YOU MAKING? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

YOU'LL SEE, MR. ORIGINAL!

THE DOG IN THE NEXT CUBICLE HOWLED ALL THAT NIGHT, BLOSSERING AND SHARLING AND SCRATCHING. GUNNER SHUDDERED. THE DOG WAS A BEAST, NOW... A HUNGER-CRAZED BEAST, AND THE HAMMERING WENT ON...



FOOD! GIVE ME SOME FOOD! PLEASE

DO YOU CALL WHAT YOU'VE BEEN FEEDING US FOOD, MR. ORIGINAL?

DAWN CAME AGAIN AND THE SECOND DAY PASSED. NEXT DOOR, THE DOG WAS FIGHTING WITH ITSELF, THROWING ITSELF AGAINST THE CUBICLE SIDES AND HOWLING MADLY...



BRUTUS WILL KILL ANYONE THAT GETS FOOT IN THERE NOW!

GUNNER HIMSELF WAS HALF-CRAZED WITH HUNGER AS THE THIRD NIGHT CAME. AND THEN, TOWARDS MIDNIGHT, THE HAMMERING STOPPED. THE CELLAR WAS SUDDENLY FLOODED WITH LIGHT. EVEN BRUTUS STOPPED SHARLING IN ANTICIPATION.



THEY'RE... THEY'RE OPENING MY CUBICLE.

THEY STOOD BEFORE HIM... DIRTY, SWEATED, TIRED FROM LONG HOURS OF LABOR... THE INVITED... THE BLIND UNCLENN CARPENTERS. GUNNER BLINKED OUT AT THEM...



COME, MR. ORIGINAL! YOU ARE FREE TO GO!

FOLLOW US, MR. ORIGINAL! WE BUILT THIS JUST FOR YOU! IT LEADS TO THE CELLAR STEPS... AND FREEDOM!

GUNNER STOOD UP AS THEY DARTED OFF. HE COULD HEAR THEIR FOOTSTEPS FAGE AS THEY ROUNDED CORNERS AND RAN DOWN LONG CORRIDORS THAT TURNED AND TWISTED AND DOUBLED BACK. GUNNER STARED...

THEY... THEY BUILT A MAZE?
A PUZZLE? I HAVE TO
FIGURE IT OUT?



AND THEN GUNNER SAW THE GLEAMING GLITTERING BLIVERS OF STEEL EMBEDDED IN THE MAZE WALLS...

RAZOR BLADES? THE WALLS ARE
LINED WITH RAZOR BLADES?
THEY WANT ME TO CUT MYSELF?

WHY? WH
WHY WOULD I
HURRY?



GUNNER LAUGHED TO HIMSELF AS HE STARTED OUT OF HIS CORNERS...

A SOUND BEHIND GUNNER PROVE
HIS BLOOD? A SHRIEL AND A SCREAM
OF A DOOR SPRING...

SAVING? HUNGER-GRAZED
BROTHER? THEY'VE FREED
HIM TOO!

GUNNER BEGAN TO RUN. HE HAD TO
REACH FREEDOM BEFORE THAT
STARVED DOG COULD HIM! HE RAN
DOWN THE TWISTING MAZE CORRI-
DORS... THE SOUND OF THE LOVING
SMILING DOG BEHIND HIM

THE FOGGIST IF I'M CAREFUL.
IF I TAKE MY TIME... I'LL
NEVER HAVE TO TOUCH THE
WALLS... JUST WALK SLOWLY
LIKE THIS CAREFUL

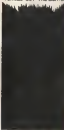


OH, LORD... LORD



HE BRUSHED AGAINST THE RAZOR BLADES, SLASHING HIS FLESH. HE STUMBLED AND GOT UP... RAN ON... FRIGHTENED... WILD... DOWN THROUGH THE TWISTING, DOUBLING-BACK MAZE CORRIDORS WITH THE RAZOR-LINED WALLS AND THE SLITHERING HOUND CLOSE BEHIND.

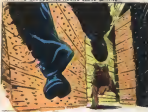
AND THEN SOME HOT
TURNED OUT THE LIGHTS?



DOGS? WHOSE TONGUE, SUN-
NER? NOW, NOW? DON'T GO TO
PIECES? AFTER ALL? IT'S
ALMOST LIKE BEING BLIND?
WELL, KIDDIES... THAT'S MY
FORGIVING... STORY FOR THIS
FIRST ISSUE OF G.E.'S NEW
MAG? NOW IT'S TIME TO CLOSE

THE VAULT
OF HORROR
AND TURN YOU
BACK TO HIM.

AS THE
DISMEMBERED
PARTS OF A
CORPSE SAID
WHEN THEY WERE
SHIPPED TO THE
UNDERTAKERS?
"WE'LL GET
TOGETHER
AGAIN!" SHE?



GONE TO SEED

It was back-breaking work, but it *had* to be done. Right away, too. He couldn't risk hiding the body of his wife in the cellar any longer . . . one of the farm hands might accidentally stumble over the corpse and start asking mighty dangerous questions. It was urgent, Dan Gret knew, to dispose of Emily right now, in this field he was plowing for spring planting. No sense in leaving a murdered wife around for the law to find!

Dan Gret heard the farm hands chattering over in the next field . . . he'd have to bawl 'em out about all this horsing around on *his* time. But at the moment he was too busy trying to gouge a hole in the ground. At first he'd been worried about the noise his shovel would make as he burrowed into the earth, but that had been taken care of without much trouble. The motor of the idling plow made so much noise that those loafers working for him wouldn't pay him any mind. And the bulk of the machine had been carefully maneuvered into place so that it acted as a shield between him and the overalled men seeding the adjoining acre. Thus, Dan Gret had resolved, was to be a *private* burial!

Dan Gret crouched low, in the shadow of the plow. By stretching out full length, he managed to tug the corpse from behind the grumbling machine and oulge it into the makeshift grave. There would be less than a foot of dirt blanketing Emily's body . . . but as soon as the hired hands got a day off he'd hurry back and dig a good deep hole to house the corpse. Within a few weeks the seeds'd be sprouting and the field would burst into furious bloom. Dan Gret grinned as he patted the last shovelful of dirt into place. Not only

was he getting rid of this devil he'd grown to hate . . . he was also helping to fertilize the coming crop!

He straightened up and surveyed his work with a critical eye. His eyes popped: one of Emily's hands was sticking up out of the soil! He lunged forward . . . and heard, with dread, the sound of voices approaching. Those bums who worked for him were coming across the field in his direction!

Dan Gret sprang toward the droning plow. If he could move the machine sideways just a few feet . . . set it directly over Emily's body . . . the danger of the moment could be averted. He turned once, to look back at the tell-tale mound . . . and his foot slid out from under him. His arms flailed the air frantically as he tried to regain his balance: his hand crashed sharply against the gear lever. The plow started immediately to swing in a rumbling circle, because of the way he had cramped the steering wheel. In motionless horror he saw the glittering blades bearing down on him!

Dan Gret screeched in alarm. Then the razor-sharp metal slashed through his flesh . . . the ponderous steel crunched over his writhing body . . . the huge wheels ground over him so that he was drenched in his own gushing blood.

By the time the farm hands reached him, Dan Gret was slashed almost beyond recognition. With gaping wonder the hired men stared down at Dan Gret's corpse . . . buried alongside that of his wife Emily, in the gory, blood-spattered grave. It was a real family plot!

SAGAS OF THE SEA, SHIPS, PLUNDER AND...

PIRACY

BUT IF YOU *CAN'T FIND PIRACY* AT YOUR LOCAL NEWSSTAND, YOU CAN *SUBSCRIBE!* JUST FILL OUT THE COUPON AND MAIL, TOGETHER WITH *ONE HUNDRED PIECES OF GENT* (THAT'S ONE BUCK, LAND-LUBBERS!). TO:

OKAY, BLUE EATS. YOU SHAMSHARD ME!
I ENCLOSE \$1.00 FOR THE NEXT EIGHT ISSUES
OF BLACT!

Figure 1

1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 2680, 26

Figure 1 | **Flowchart of the study**



10

A POINT OF ORDER! IF YOU'RE EXPECTING E.C.'S NEWEST HORROR MAG TO BE BETTER THAN TALES FROM THE CRYPT, THE VAULT OF HORROR, AND THE HAUNT OF FEAR, YOU'LL BE SADLY DISAPPOINTED! IT'S ONLY JUST AS GOOD!



INVESTIGATE YOUR FAVORITE NEWSSTAND FOR THE FIRST "JUST-AS-GOOD" ISSUE! HOWEVER IF YOU'RE TIED UP WITH RED TAPE (ADHESIVE, THAT IS!) AND YOU'D RATHER **SUBSCRIBE**, FILL OUT THE COUPON AND SEND IN, TOGETHER WITH AN **UNDOCTORED PHOTO** OF GEORGE WASHINGTON ON A \$1.00 BILL YOU'LL RECEIVE 8 **UNCROPPED** ISSUES IN THE MAIL.

THE CRYPT-KEEPER
ROOM 106
225 LAFAYETTE STREET
N.Y.C. 12, N.Y.

HERE'S MY BUCK. SEND ME THE NEXT 8 ISSUES OF YOUR NEWEST MAG, **THE CRYPT OF TERROR**.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ ZONE NO. _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

HERE'S HOW ONE FAILURE TURNED HIS MISERABLE LIFE INTO A HORRIBLE...

SUCCESS STORY



THE POLICE SURGEON INSERTED THE HOLLOW NEEDLE INTO ELMER'S ARM AND SECONDS LATER THE SOORUM PENTATHAL SOLUTION WAS FLOWING INTO HIS BLOODSTREAM, TAKING ITS EFFECT. ELMER'S SHRILL MANICUAL LAUGHTER FAGED INTO A WHEDDING SARR. THE PABID FURY OF HIS CONVULSIVE STRUGGLING SURSIED INTO HELPLESS EXHAUSTION. THE THREE BRANWY POLICEMEN RELAXED THEIR HOLD THEN, AND MOPPED THEIR SWEAT-BEADED BROWNS. ELMER PRESTON SLUMPED LIMPLY ON THE SHABBY SOFA, HIS FLACCID FACE CHANGED TO A YELLO-BREENISH HUE. HIS USUALLY SOFT, LIQUID-BROWN EYES WERE SLAZED AND STARRING BOW. HE STARTED TO SPEAK, WITHOUT EMOTION, IN A GOWERING MONOTONE...



I'M DEAD I DID IT! IT...IT HAD TO BE THIS WAY. DON'T YOU SEE?

AND, MR. PRESTON, WE DON'T NEED YOUR BETTER TELL US ABOUT IT!

ELMER'S FACE TOOK ON A THOUGHTFUL EXPRESSION AND HIS EYES SHADED OVER WITH A DISTANT LOOK. HAUNTED BY MEMORIES OF THE PAST, HE BOMED DEEPLY, THEN SPOKE AGAIN IN A COLORLESS DRAWLING MONOTONE...

I...I WAS ALWAYS A FURID MAN. IT'S NOT GOOD FOR A MAN TO BE THING... ESPECIALLY A MARRIED MAN. ESPECIALLY A MAN MARRIED TO A WOMAN LIKE IDA!

"MAYBE WE COULD HAVE BEEN HAPPY TOGETHER IN OUR LITTLE APARTMENT... IDA AND I. BUT ONE EVENING HER FOLKS CAME TO DINNER. HER FATHER WAS ALL TENSE, BURSTING WITH NEWS THAT HE FINALLY EXPLODED ON ME AT DINNER. ...

ELMER, YOU MUST BEEL WONDERING HOW COME MIM AND I DON'T GIVE YOU TWO A WEDDING BFT

WHY, NO, MR. WALLACE, I NEVER



CH. Chatterbox

SURE YOU WONDERED!
WELL, SON... WE'VE GOT
A SURPRISE! WE'RE
GIVING YOU A START-UP
A HOME OF YOUR
OWN! ONE THOU-
SAND DOLLARS
FOR A DOWN
PAYMENT...

ONE
THOUSAND?
WHY, MR.
WALLACE?
... I CAN ONLY
KNOW WHAT
TO SAY!

I SHOULD HAVE SAID, "NO THANK
YOU", BUT I CAN NO HIDDEN TRAP
AT THE MOMENT, AND WHEN, EXCUSE
GOOD WILL, MR. WALLACE OFFERED
ME HIS HAND, I GRASPED IT GRATE-
FULLY...

JUST BE GOOD TO
MY DAUGHTER,
ELMER... AND BE
HAPPY TOGETHER!

TH-THANK
YOU, SIR.

NOW THAT I THINK BACK, IT SEEMS
THAT DA MUST HAVE KNOWN ALL
THE TIME. BUT THAT NIGHT, SHE HAD
TO HER FATHER, THREW HER ARMS
AROUND HIS NECK, AND WEPT FOR
JOY...

OH, DADDY DADDY! IT'S WORTH
ANY SACRI-
FICE TO US.
YOU AND ELMER
OUR CHILDREN
A PROPER START!

"FOR AN ELEGANT TWO WEEKS, MA AND I HAD
HUNTED. WE FOUND THIS PLACE... SMALL, COMFORTA-
BLE, A DREAM COTTAGE. THE DOWN PAYMENT FURNISH-
ING THE PLACE EMPTIED MY BANK ACCOUNT, BUT I
WAS DELICIOUSLY HAPPY. THE SUNDAY AFTER WE MOVED
IN, THE WALLACES CAME TO SEE OUR NEW HOME..."

I DON'T
UNDER-
STAND,
MR. WAL-
LACE...

YOU REMEMBER I SAID MA AND I
I WERE MAKING A SACRIFICE
TO HELP YOU GET STARTED IN
YOUR OWN HOME, EL MER...

THE
POINT, HENBERT!
GET TO
THE POINT!

THE POINT IS, ELMER, WE HAD TO GO
INTO MORTGAGE TO GET THAT THOUSAND
DOLLARS FOR YOU, AND THEN MY
BUSINESS SLOWED DOWN, AND...
RIGHT NOW... WHAT WITH WHAT I
DO... I...

WELL, WE'RE
HAVING
TROUBLE
MAKING
ENDS MEET,
ELMER

"I WAS BEING TAKEN FOR A WELL-PLANNED RIDE...
AND MY LOVING BRIDE HAD THE STEERING WHEEL IN HER
OWN LITTLE CLUTCHING HANDS..."

WE CAN'T LET MOTHER AND DADDY
SUFFER... NOT AFTER ALL THEY'VE
DONE FOR US, CAN WE, DEAR? TELL
THEM THEY'RE WELCOME TO SHARE
WHAT WE HAVE UNTIL THINGS ARE
BETTER. TELL THEM!

HUH... JIM!
THAT'S...
THAT'S RIGHT
OF COURSE!

"THAT WAS THE FIRST PAINFUL RUMBLING OF THE TEM-
PEST YET TO COME. THE WALLACES RANG UP THEIR
APARTMENT AND MOVED IN WITH US. MA WAS A MOST
GENEROUS DAUGHTER..."

RIGHT IN HERE, MOTHER AND DADDY! WE'LL
LET THEM HAVE OUR ROOM, ELMER. IT'S
CLOSER TO THE BATHROOM, AND SINCE
IT'S ONLY TEMPORARY...

"TEMPORARY, SHE SAID! BUT BEFORE I KNOW IT, THEY'VE BEEN THERE FIVE WEEKS. I COULD JUST ABOUT MANAGE TO MEET MY BILLS, IF THERE WEREN'T OTHER DEMANDS ON MY SMALL INCOME.



BUT, I CAN'T AFFORD A T.V. SET, MR. WALLACE. NOT EVEN A SMALL-SCREEN SET."

THAT'S GRATITUDE! I GIVE YOU \$1000 FOR A HOME, AND YOU EXPECT ME TO FURNISH IT, TOO?"

"AFTER MR. WALLACE GOT HIS T.V. SET, MRS. WALLACE HAD A REQUEST:



YOU'VE BEEN SLAMMING WITH WHAT YOU SAVE ON LAUNDRY FOR THE FOUR OF US. THIS WASHING MACHINE WILL PAY FOR ITSELF!"

"MONTHS WENT BY, MY BLUNDER GROWN AND WIDENED UPON ME LIKE A BILLSKOTE. ONE DAY I FOUND THE COURAGE TO TALK TO IDA.



I LIKE YOUR FOLKS, IDA, BUT I CAN'T GO ON SUPPORTING THEM FOR...

SUPPORTING? AFTER WHAT THEY'VE DONE? WHAT A LOATHSOME WAY TO REPAY THEM FOR THEIR GENEROSITY!"

BELIEVE ME, I'M GRATEFUL... BUT THAT MONEY WAS JUST ENOUGH TO LET ME GO INTO DEBT FOR THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS. SADDLED WITH A MORTGAGE, I'VE GOT PAYMENTS TO MEET... ON THAT... AND THE OTHER FURNITURE... AND...

THEN A FEW MORE DOLLARS A MONTH WON'T HURT! TELL YOU WHAT! I'LL PUT THE TEN BLOOD DOWN ON THE T.V. SET!"



"THE CORNERS OF IDA'S MOUTH DROPPED, AND HER EYES WERE COLD AND HARD... PIERCING ME THROUGH AS SHE SPOKE...



YOU'RE BLAMING MOTHER AND DADDY BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT A GOOD PROVIDER. YOU MIGHT AS WELL KNOW IT, ELMER. I'M NOT SATISFIED... NOT AT ALL SATISFIED. I THOUGHT YOU HAD AMBITION! I THOUGHT YOU'D GO PLACES... GET AHEAD IN THE WORLD. INSTEAD, YOU'RE STUCK IN A POOR PAYING JOB.

IDA SPOKE BITTERLY AND LOVELY... LOUD ENOUGH FOR HER PARENTS TO HEAR. THEY ACCEPTED IT AS AN INVITATION TO JOIN HER PIERCE MARRANGE...



SOMETIMES I WISH IDA HADN'T... WELL, I'D BETTER NOT SAY WHAT I'M THINKING."

I THOUGHT YOU HAD OUTGROWN ME! I THOUGHT YOU'D WANT TO GET AHEAD?"

"DRIVEN MORE BY DESPERATION AND DEBT THAN BY THEIR GUILT, I FINALLY GATHERED THE COURAGE TO ASK MY BOSS, MR. BENTLEY, FOR A RAISE. BUT THE MINUTE I ENTERED HIS PLUSH OFFICE...



I'VE BEEN MEANING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT YOUR WORK, PRESTON. YOU'VE BEEN SETTING CARELESS LATELY. SLOPPY... VERY SLOPPY!"

I... I SORRY! REALIZE, MR. BENTLEY! I'M SORRY. I'LL DO BETTER IN THE FUTURE! I PROMISE!"

"I HAD UNCOVERED A GEM BY COMPLAINING AGAINST IDA'S POLICE, AND FROM THAT DAY ON, A SPIRITFUL TORRENT OF CRITICISM FLOODED THROUGH THE FLOODGATES AT ME..."

"HOW COULD I TELL THEM MR BENTLY HAD MORE THAN REFUSED ME A RAISE? THEY SAID HE NO PEACE, FROM THE MOMENT I CAME HOME FROM WORK..."



WHAT ABOUT THAT RAISE I TOLD YOU TO ASK FOR, ELMER? WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO GET ENOUGH NERVE?

ASK FOR? YOU DON'T ASK FOR A RAISE? YOU DEMAND IT? THAT'S THE ONLY WAY TO GET AHEAD... BY DEMANDING...



WELL, ELMER, NOW'S YOUR MAKE OUT! DID YOU TELL THEM JOSH OF YOURS TO COME AHEAD OR GET A NEW BOY?

I TOLD HIM NOTHIN' MR WALLACE. NOBODY TALKS THAT WAY TO MR. BENTLY!

"...AND I'D ALWAYS GET THE SAME RESPONSE..."

"EVERY MEAL BECAME A NIGHT-MARE, FROM THE TIME I'D SIT DOWN..."

"I'D FORCE MYSELF TO EAT, AND THE PASTELISS FISH WOULD SOAR ON THE WAY DOWN..."



WAL, DIDN'T... GOOD LORD, MAN! DON'T YOU WANT TO GET AHEAD IN THIS WORLD?!



YOU'RE A FAILURE, ELMER! I CAN'T STAND A FAILURE!

ALL MY LIFE I FIGHT TO GET AHEAD...



DON'T WASTE YOUR BREATH, HERBERT! YOU CAN'T TURN A JELLY-FISH INTO A TIGER SHARK, I ALWAYS SAY!

"SUDDENLY THERE'D BE A VIOLENT CHURNING IN THE PIT OF MY STOMACH AND I'D HAVE TO RUN FROM THE ROOM..."

"I'D WALK IT TO THE BATHROOM, MOST OF THE TIME... AND ALL BUT HEAVE UP MY INSIDES..."



SO DON'T RUN! I WORE IN YOUR SHOES, I WOULDN'T WANT TO HEAR THE TRUTH ABOUT MYSELF, EITHER!

BEE? YOU TRY TO TELL HIM SOMETHING FOR HIS OWN GOOD AND HE RUNS OFF IN A HUFF! HE'S INSULTED!

WALLACE!



YOU MARRIED A REAL LEMON, IDA!

HE'LL NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHIN'!

OH, DON'T!

"NOW DID THE THUNDER STOP WHEN WE WENT TO BED. IDA WOULD HAD ME TELL SHE WAS HOARSE, AND I'D COVER MY HEAD WITH MY PILLOW, BUT I'D STILL HEAR."

ONLY SIXTY-SEVEN MISERABLE DOLLARS A WEEK... IN THESE DAYS. I'M ASHAMED FOR MOTHER AND DADDY TO KNOW... BUT OF COURSE THEY DO KNOW. THEY KNOW THE KIND OF CLOTHES I WEAR... THEY SEE THE FURNITURE... THREADBARE... JUNK!

PLEASE... IDA! IT'S LATE.



"WHEN I'D HEARD ALL I COULD STAND, I'D HURRY FROM THE LIVING ROOM."

NEVER MIND, MOTHER! FROM NOW ON, I'LL DO THE BUYING! WE CAN'T AFFORD MUCH, MAYBE, BUT WHAT WE DO GET WILL BE THE BEST!



'EVER A LOOKED DOOR WAS NO GUARANTEE OF PRIVACY."

ARE YOU GOING TO STAY IN THERE ALL NIGHT, ELMER? LISTEN... ABOUT THE TV SET! I WAS DOWNTOWN TODAY, TALKING TO A DEALER ABOUT A TRADE-IN ON A LARGER SCREEN, AND...



"SO THE MONTHS DROGGED INTO YEARS AND THE WALLACE STAYED ON WITH US... BASSING ME, HOUSING... COMPLAINING... ALWAYS COMPLAINING..."

YOU REMEMBER WHEN YOU BOUGHT THAT WASHING MACHINER? I TOLD YOU IT DIDN'T PAY TO BUY CHEAP! WELL, IT'S READY FOR THE JUNKHEAP!

IT WON'T GET LONELY THERE, BELIEVE ME. IT'LL HAVE THAT STINKING TWELVE-INCH-SCREEN T.V. SET FOR COMPANY.



'I WAS TOO TIMID TO ADMIT IT TO MYSELF THEN, BUT I'D COME TO HATE IDA AND HER MOTHER AND FATHER. I'D BE SHAVING IN THE MORNING AND MY WIFE WOULD COME IN AND THE DAY'S BASHING WOULD BEGIN..."

I DON'T SEE WHY DADDY SHOULD HAVE TO KEEP POUNDING IT INTO YOU! YOU SHOULD WANT TO GET AHEAD YOURSELF, ELMER.

I KNOW, DEAR.



"THIS MORNING, AS ALWAYS, WE SAT AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE AND I LISTENED TO THEM TALKING, TALKING... AND HEARD, THE STORM GATHERED. I COULD HEAR IT RUMBLING..."

A MAN WITHOUT AMBITION IS A WALKING CORPSE, ELMER! I KNOW I'M REPEATING MYSELF, BUT TRY TO BE A SUCCESS. TRY, ELMER. ELMER? YOU LISTENING?

MOM! ONLY YES, YES, I'LL TRY!



"AND TODAY, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS, I DIDN'T GO TO WORK. I WANDERED AROUND THE STREETS, WONDERING WHAT WAS WRONG WITH ME... LISTENING TO THE STORM THUNDERING IN THE DISTANCE, COMING CLOSER... CLOSER... READY TO BREAK AT ANY MOMENT..."

WHY DON'T I GET AHEAD? EVERYBODY ELSE DOES! I'VE GOT TO! I'VE... HEH HEH... I'VE... EN-JEE...



"WHEN I GOT HOME THAT NIGHT, LATE FOR DINNER, THEY JUST STARED AT ME...IDA AND MR. WALLACE AND MRS. WALLACE. THE STORM RUMBLED AROUND...THREATENING...THREATENING TO BREAK...THENE...IN MY THROBBING HEAD...AND I JUST STARED BACK AT THEM..."



WELL?

IT'S ABOUT FINE!

WHERE WERE YOU TODAY? MR. BENTLEY CALLED!

"THEN, SUDDENLY, THE STORM TORE LOOSE...HOWLING, SCREAMING-BLACK AROUND ME...THUNDERING...WILD TEMPEST-FURY AND ABOVE THE STORM, THEIR VOICES...THEIR RASTY VOICES..."



IS THAT THE WAY TO TRY TO GET AHEAD...STAY HOME FROM WORK?

YOU SAID YOU'D TRY TO GET AHEAD, ELMER!

WHY CAN'T YOU GET AHEAD, ELMER?

"I RAN OUT...BUT NOT TO THE BATH-ROOM THIS TIME. I RAN TO THE KITCHEN...THROUGH THE RAGING STORM, I CAME BACK WITH THE MEAT CLEAVER..."



ELMER!

"THE STORM SHRINKED IN MY BRAIN. WHITE BLINDING LIGHTNING FLASHES EXPLODED. THE BLACK FURY TURNED RED, RED, SPURTING RED AS I RAISED THE CLEAVER..."



ELMER!

YAAA...AAH...

ELMER PRESTON STARED STRAIGHT AHEAD, SMILING. THE WILD GLEAM RETURNED TO HIS EYES, AND HE CHOKED OUT MORE WORDS BETWEEN SHORT, HIGH-PITCHED BURSTS OF LAUGHTER...



SO YOU SEE, I...EH, EH...DID GET AHEAD, EH, EH...AFTER ALL!

AND SLOWLY, THE POLICEMEN FOLLOWED ELMER'S WILD GAZE TO THE DINNER TABLE...TO THE MEAT PLATE SETTINGS...AND THE PLATES WITH THEIR MARCHING PARS STANDING BACK AT THEM...



I...EH, EH...I NOT ONLY GOT A HEAD...I...EH, EH...I GOT THREE HEADS!

YEAH, PRESTON! CHUCK...WE SEE

YOU WERE A REAL SUGGER, PRESTON!

HEH, HEH. A TRIPLE HEADER, EH, HIGHEST SO, IDA AND HER FOLKS DROVE ELMER BATS, BUT THEY WENT OUT ON STRINGS...IN ONE, TWO, THREE GREEN...ALL RIGHT OVER THE PLATE. WELL, THE GAME'S OVER NOW, CALLED ON ACCOUNT OF MENTAL STORM! AND YOU AND I WILL TAKE A BASH-ONCE TILL NEXT WE MEET. HOPE YOU LIKED MY NEW MAN, NOW THE OLD WITCH AWAITS TO WIND UP THE PRESIDENTIALTIES. THIS IS YOUR DRAFT-KEEPER, SIDDING YOU GOOD-BYE AND WISHING YOU NOTHING BUT THE BEST...RIGHTBARES!



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE-HEE! AND NOW IT'S WIND-UP SPOT IN C.K.'S NEW CREEPS COMIC, AND YOUR DRIVER-CHEF, THE OLD WITCH, IS READY TO STIR UP HER GROSSY CAULDRON AND LAKE OUT A LURID LITERARY LUNCHEON. THIS TASTY TALE OF TERROR-FREMORE IS TOLD BY ONE TONY BARRETT. LISTEN, NOW, AS HE SARFS OUT THE DELIRIUM DISH HE CALLS...

TATTER UP!



DELIRIUM

MET I'M TONY BARRETT. I'M NOT A BAD-LOOKIN' BUT I'M FOUNG, FOD THIRTY-FOUR. OAK, SO NOW COME I COULD SIT AROUND ON A HOT-REDDIN' COUCH, HOLDIN' HANDS WITH A SHAGGLE-TOOTHED HAG NAMED FANNY OGDEN. NOW COME I COULD STAND THE WILDIE-YELLOWED WALL PAPERS... THE CRACKED CEILING... THE WHOLE HOUSE STINKIN' LIKE THE MOUTH OF A DUE-UP COFFIN... AND THE STINK OF FANNY HERSELF! YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT! YOU GOT THE PICTURE FANNY OGDEN WAS SUPPOSED TO BE LEADIN'!

I... I BEEN MEANN' T' ASK YOU, FANNY. I JUST DON'T KNOW NOW! I... I BEEN MEANN' T' ASK YOU IF YOU'LL MARRY ME!

OH, TONY! I'VE BEEN PRAYIN' YOU'D ASK ME... DREAMIN' OF IT... BUT NEVER REALLY BELIEVIN' YOU WOULD! OH, YEAH, TONY! YEAH! I WILL MARRY YOU!



SURE I WANTED THAT WOODSOME WITCH FOR A WIFE. I WANTED TO MARRY THE HUNDRED GRAND FORTUNE TO HEARD ABOUT. THE DOOM HER FIRST HUSBAND HAD LEFT HER, THE MISERABLE WIDOW WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE EVERY LAST CENT OF IT. NO, THERE, IN THAT FOUL-SMELLIN' FILTHY HOUSE...

THEN I QUINN...CHORE THIS CALLS FOR A KISS!

IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I'VE BEEN KISSED, TONY!



WELL, I'LL STOP THE OBSCUREST DETAILS EXCEPT TO SAY THAT FANNY BECAME MRS. TOMMY BARRETT, AND I STARTED HITTING THE BOTTLE TO BRACE MYSELF AGAINST LIVING WITH HER...



AREN'T YOU COMING UP, MONEY-BURN? IT'S LATE...

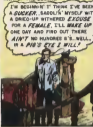
YOU GO AHEAD, FANNY! I'LL BE UP IN AN HOUR OR SO. DON'T WAIT UP.

TROUBLE WITH DINNER? WAS IT USED TO GET ME DOWN, IT'D WORRIE. I'D WORRY REAL BAD...



MAYBE THERE **AIN'T** NO COOKIN, MAYBE I GOT A **BUR STEER** FROM THE **BUT** THAT **FOLD ME**

AFTER THE FIRST TWO WEEKS, I GOT REAL DISGUSTED. THERE WAS NO HINT OF THE BOON.



I'M BEGINNIN' T' THINK I'VE BEEN A **DOCKER**, SADDLEIN' MYSELF WITH A **DRICK-UP** WITHERED **EXCUSE** FOR A **FEMALE**. I'LL **WAKE UP** ONE DAY AND FIND OUT THERE **AIN'T** NO HUNDRED S'-'S WELL, IN A **PIR'S** STE I WILL!

SO I WENT UP INTO THE BEDROOM WHERE FANNY SAT WITH THAT STRABBLED WOP OF HERB UP IN CURLERS. BUT I DIDN'T LOOK AT FANNY THERE. I HEADED FOR THE CLOSET...FOR MY SUITCASE.



FANNY IS THERE SOMETHING **WROUNG**?

FEAR, BABY! YOU AND ME! I'M **CLEARIN'** OUT.

I BOUNCED MY SUITCASE ONTO THE BED AND TOSSED MY CLOTHES INTO IT. MY BRIDE JUMPED UP LIKE A BEE'D STUNG HER, AND SHE THREW HER SNEY ARM AROUND ME.



TOMMY! PLEASE! DON'T LEAVE ME! PLEASE DON'T!

WE MADE A MISTAKE! FORGET IT! FORGET ME, FANNY!

TOMMY I **KNOW** I'M **UGLY**. UGLY AND OLD. BUT I'M **WICK**. I NEVER TOLD YOU, DID I? I'VE GOT A LOT OF **MONEY**. AND I **LOVE** YOU, TOMMY... AS MUCH AS I CAN. YOU'RE **HANDSOME**. **YOUNG**. I HAVE JUST A **FEW** YEARS LEFT. STAY WITH ME AND MAKE THEM **HAPPY** YEARS, DEAR, AND WHEN I'M **GONE**, ALL THAT **MONEY** WILL BE **YOURS**!

OHAY, BABY! DRAFT YOU TALKED ME INTO IT!



WELL, IT TURNED OUT THERE **WAS** MONEY AFTER ALL. THE **BIT'S** BEEN **RIGHT**. SO I DID MY **BEST** TO MAKE FANNY **HAPPE**. I **STAYED**. BUT I WONDERED WHAT SHE **LIVED ON**, IF SHE NEVER **SPENT** ANY OF HER **DOWRY**. AND ONE DAY, I FOUND OUT...



IS MRS. **BARRETT** AT HO...

YOU! THE **BUY** I **WENT**! THE **BUY** THAT **TOLD** ME ABOUT HER...

I'M A **RAGMAN**! MRS. OGDEN ALWAYS SELLS ME HER OLD **RAGS**...



MRS. OGDEN IS MRS. **BARRETT** NOW, MISTER. MY **WIFE**! DON'T YOU **REMEMBER** ME? YOU **TOLD** ME ABOUT HER...

YOU HAVE A **NICE WIFE**, SIR. SHE'S VERY **GOOD** TO ME. SHE ALWAYS HAS **RAGS** TO **SELL** ME. I'M A **RAGMAN**...



MAYBE I'M **WRONG** BUT I COULD **BREAK** IT WAS FOR I MET THAT **NIGHT**...

BUT AT THAT **MOMENT**, **FANNY** TRUMBLED DOWN THE **STAIRS** WITH A **LOAD** OF OLD **RAGS**... MEN'S **SUITS**... WOMEN'S **DRESSES**, **KIDS'** **CLOTHES**. THE **RAGMAN** **CRIMED** LIKE AN **IDOT** WHEN HE **SAW** THEM...



FINE, MRS. **BARRETT**! **SEVEN** **PENNY** **FINES**! YOU **GET** **SEVEN** **DOLLARS** FOR **THESE**! **FOR** THAT **OLD** **LARDERET** **WOMAN**!

THE **OLD** **CREEP** **STOPPED** **COLD** AND **SAVE** ME A **FIGHT** **STARE**, LIKE **IT'D** **INSULTED** **HIM**. **FANNY** **TRIED** TO **COVER** UP...



TONY **DON'T** **MEAN** ANY-
THING. **HE**
JUST **DON'T**
UNDERSTAND

FEAR, **MAR**.
NO **HARD**
FEELINGS!
IF **YOU** **WANT**
TO **OVERPAKE**
IT'S **YOUR**
BUSINESS...

YOUR **WIFE** **HAD**
BEEN **GOOD** **TO**
ME... **AND** **I** **TRY**
TO **BE** **GOOD** **TO**
HER. **HERE** **YOU**
SAY, **MRS**, **OGD**...
MRS, **BARRETT**!

AFTER THE **RAGMAN** **PAID** **FANNY**, HE **LEFT**. I **FELT** **PRETTY** **SHOK** **INSIDE**... YOU **CAN** **IMAGINE**...



WHAT'S **WITH** **THIS** **RAG**
BUSINESS, **BASTY**? **WHERE**
DO **YOU** **GET** **THEM**?

WHY I **PICK** **THEM** UP,
TONY... **HERE** **AND**
THERE...

NICE, **RIGHT**. **BEIN'** **MARRIED** **TO** **AN** **OLD** **HAD**-**MIGHT** **ENOUGH**! **NOW** I **HAD** **TO** **FIND** **OUT** **SHE** **WAS** **A** **RAG-PICKER** **BEHINDS**. **THAT** **WAS** **THE** **LAST** **STRAW**. **I'D** **MADE** **UP** **MY** **MIND** **WHEN** **FANNY** **ANNOUNCED** **AFTER** **LUNCH**...



I'M **GOING** **OUT** **DEAR**.
DON'T **BE** **TOO** **LOVELY**
WHILE I'M **GONE**!

FEAR **FANNY**!
SURE!

FANNY **DIDN'T** **SEE** **WHAT** **SHE** **WAS** **GOIN'** **OUT** **FOR**, **BUT** I **KNEW** **IT** **WAS** **TO** **DO** **SOME** **RAG-PICKIN'**. **WELL**, **THAT** **WAS** **OKAY** **WITH** **ME**. **THAT** **GAVE** **ME** **TIME** **TO** **RUMMAGE** **THROUGH** **THE** **MUSCLE** **CRUMMED** **ATTC** **AFTER** **SOME** **PORN'S** **OF** **MY** **OWN**...



I **BOT** **TO** **FIND** **THAT** **DOUGH**! I **BOT** **TO** **FIND** **THAT** **DOUGH** **AND** **GET** **AWAY**! **ME**, **MARRIED** **TO** **A** **TOAD-FACED** **RAG-PICKER**! I'LL **GO** **HUTS** **IF** I **HAVE** **T'** **KEEP** **ON** **LIVIN'** **WITH** **HER**!

I TURNED THAT OTTIC UPSIDE DOWN BUT IT WAS NO SOAP. I DIDN'T FIND A THING.



IT'S GOT TO BE IN THE HOUSE SOMEWHERE! YOU JUST DON'T KNOW A HUNDRED BRAND IN A HOUSEHOLE! I'LL FIND IT IF...

TONY! WHERE ARE YOU TONY?

IT WAS FANNIE SCALLIN' ME. I WENT DOWN AND GOT NAUSEOUS LOOKIN' AT HER...THAT PATCHED AND PAID BRASS. THE TWO DIFFERENT COLORED COTTON STOCKING'S...AND ON HER FEET...NO KIDDIN'!...SHE HAD A BIRTY SACK STUFFED FULL OVER HER SHOULDER...



LOOKS LIKE HUNTY WAS PRETTY GOOD TODAY, FANNY. HOW MUCH YOU GOT TIGHT BUCKS WORTH, MABE TEN?

WHERE WERE YOU TONY?

I COULDN'T STAND THE MESS AROUND THIS HOUSE ANY MORE, SO I STARTED CLEANIN' UP, IN THE ATTIC.



IN THE ATTIC? DR. WELL, THAT'S NICE.

FANNY DIDN'T SEEM DISTURBED ABOUT ME WORKIN' AROUND UP IN THE ATTIC, SO I FIGURED THAT'S NOT WHERE THE HUNDRED B'S WAS STASHED AWAY. I WAS ALL ON EDGE WAITIN' FOR HER TO GO OUT AGAIN BE' I COULD START LOOKIN' SOMEWHERE ELSE. BUT FIRST THE BABMAN TURNED UP.



I COULD SWEAR HE'S THE SAME GUY THAT TOLD ME ABOUT FANNY.

SUCH NICE RASS, MRS. BARNETT! SUCH BEAU-TIFUL RASS.

AFTER A WHILE I GOT MAD AND RIPPED OPEN THE MATTRESS ON THE OLD MASH BED. I WAS SO BUSY, I DIDN'T HEAR FANNY SNEAK UPSTAIRS AND CREEP INTO THE ROOM LIKE A SCRAWNY OLD CAT. BUT SINCE ONLY I FELT HER THERE...



FANNY... I...

I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE STILL CLEANIN' UP, TONY.

FINALLY FANNY LEFT WITH HER RABBACK, AND I WENT TO WORK ON ONE OF THE UPSTAIRS ROOMS, PERLIN' THROUGH BATTERED MOTH-EATEN FURNITURE, FLOWIN' THROUGH THE TRASH-STUFFED CLOSET...



IT'LL TAKE ME MONTHS TO FIND THAT COUGH - A FEAR, MAYBE... UNLESS I'M LUCKY.

I COULD TELL SHE KNEW WHAT I WAS UP TO, 'CAUSE SHE HAD A SMILE INSIDE THAT BLINDED THROUGH HER EYES. SHE WAS LAUGHIN' IN HER BUTS 'CAUSE I COULDN'T FIND HER HOUND, AND IT MADE ME MAD...



FEAR, THAT'S WHAT I'M DOIN'... CLEANIN' UP THIS FILTHY PESTER! MAYBE YOU DON'T LIKE THAT.

I SAID I'M GLAD, HONEY...

THAT'S HOW IT WENT FOR WEEKS. EVERY DAY THAT BARMAN CAME AND GOT PRACTICALLY DELIRIOUS OVER SOME FOLL, BACK MY WIFE SOLD



AND EVERY DAY, AFTER SHE WENT OUT BORDOWEN THROUGH LONG-KNOWN WHAT TRASH FOR RAGS, I PLUNGED INTO MY TREASURE HUNT...



AND SEE'D COME BACK...KNOWIN' WHAT I WAS UP TO, BUT I DIDN'T GIVE A HANG EXCEPT THAT SHE WAS ALL THE TIME LAUGHIN' AT ME AND IT'D GET ALL CHOARD UP WITH HATE FOR HER...



FINALLY I COULDN'T TAKE IT NO MORE, I COULDN'T STAND FANNIE GIVIN ME THE HORSE-LAUGH, I COULDN'T STAND LOOKIN' AT HER. SO ONE DAY, I WENT DOWN THE CELLAR AND STARTED DIGGIN'... BUT NOT FOR HER MONEY.



AND WHEN SHE GOT HOME THAT DAY, I LISTENED TO HER CALL ME, BUT I DIDN'T ANSWER. I MADE SOME NOISE AND WAITED...



FANNIE LOOKED AT ME REAL COLD LIKE AND WHISPERED SARCASMATICALLY...



FANNY COULD SEE BY MY FACE, I WAS LEVELIN'. IT WAS LIKE SHE'D NEVER EXPECTED THIS TURN OF EVENTS, SHE LET OUT A LITTLE GIGGLE AND STARTED TO RUN. I WOUND THE RICK HARD.



THE PICK HOOKED HER DEEP IN HER BACK AND SHE HIT THE CELLAR FLOOR LIKE AN OULD LOG THEN I WENT TO WORK ON THAT FACE ... THAT ANWLL MELT FACE. IT WAS JUST SOMETHIN' I HAD TO DO JUNE I WAS SETTIN' EVEN FOR HAVIN' DEGRADED MYSELF BY MAKIN' LOVE TO IT ALL THOSE MONTHS...

UH UHH UHHH UHHHH



I WAS OBTAINED FROM WHAT I'D DONE SO I GOT THE PAY EARLY THAT NIGHT AND SLEPT UNTIL I HEARD A

THE PLAYERS

LOOK, PAL. MY WIFE
TOOK OFF ON A LONG
TRIP SHE WON'T BE
BACK FOR A COUPLE
OF WEEKS COME BACK
FOR ME!

**CAN'T
YOU
TELL ME
HOW
TO
PLAY?**



AND TO TOP IT ALL OFF, THAT CRUMMY CREW KEPT COMIN' BACK, ALL THIS MORNING. I FLIPPED MY LID.

IT'S BEEN OVER TWO HUNDRED YEARS
ATTIC TO CELLAR! I GAVE YOU
EVERY RAG I COULD FIND! I
GOT NO MORE RAGS! NOW,
FOR GOD'S SAKE, LEAVE ME
ALONE!

I WAS READY TO SLAM THE DOOR
IN HIS FACE BUT, JUST TO GET RID OF
THE PEST, I GRABBED SOME SOME
ONE-POUNCE PEANUT BUTTER. WE
DON'T SEEM HAPPY WITH THEM.

THESE ARE
NOT ABOUT
MR. HARRIS
CAN'T PUT TO
REST FOR
TODAY

FORGET IT
DON'T TAKE
THE... AS A
GIFT NOW,
GO AWAY
AND DON'T
BOther
me!



AFTER I FINISHED I CLAMPED HER BLOODY BODY INTO THE GRABER AND COVERED THE WHOLE THING OVER WITH A BURL

WELL, MAYBE I WANT YOU SOMEONE WHO GOT
THE LAST LAUGH NOW



I SPENT DAYS COMBIN' THROUGH THE REST OF THE HOUSE. I EVEN TUMBLED UP THE KITCHEN, SMASHED

1. **Introduction**

IT'S JOY TO BE HERE
SOMEWHERE? IT'S JOY
TO- I CAN'T WAIT! I
CAN'T



Now I'm a guy with a strong conscience, so what with the Russian PESTERKE and PANNY LATIN' DEAD IN THE CELLAR, I COULDN'T SLEEP TONIGHT, AROUND MID-NIGHT OR SO, I HEARD A NOISE IN THE HOUSE, I GOT A RUN OUT OF MY SUITCASE AND WENT DOWNSTAIRS FOR A



The... I WAS COMIN' FROM THE CELLAR. I WENT DOWN, IT WAS HIM AGAIN... IN MY HOUSE... NOBIN' APPEARS.



I TOLD YOU I GOT NO MORE RAGS! NOW...

BUT YOU DO! NICE RAGS! THE CLOTHES ON HER!

HE WAS POINTIN' TO FANNY'S BRAVE. HE KNEW I'D KILLED HER, AND I KNEW THEN I'D HAVE TO KILL HIM. I PULLED THE TRIGGER... ONCE... TWICE... HE DIDN'T EVEN WINCE... I COULDN'T MISS AT SUCH CLOSE RANGE! I HIT YOU TWICE... I CAN SEE THE HOLES...



I LOVED HER, MR. BARNETT! I WANTED HER TO BE HAPPY! I DIDN'T EXPECT THIS!

I EMPTIED THE GUN AT HIM FOUR MORE SHOTS. BUT HE JUST STOOD THERE...



SHE NEEDED MORE THAN I COULD GIVE HER... SOMEONE YOUNG... SOMEONE LIKE YOU! THAT'S WHY I TOLD YOU ABOUT HER MONEY! SHE WANTED HER TO BE HAPPY!

DIE! I SHOT YOU SIX TIMES! DIE ALREADY!

I KEPT STAMIN' STUPIDLY AT THE SIX HOLES BURNED INTO HIS CHEST. THEN I SMASHED UP THE PICK. I SWUNG IT, CATCHIN' HIM BELOW THE SHOULDER, SHOVIN' IT INTO HIS BACK...



YOU'RE NOT HUMAN! YOU'RE NOT! THERE'S NO BLOOD! YOU'RE NOT EVEN FLESH AND BONE!

OF COURSE NOT, MR. BARNETT

HE LEAPED AT ME, WRAPPING HIS HANDS AROUND MY THROAT. FUNNY KIND OF HANDS, SOFT AND STRINGY-LIKE. HE KEPT CHOIN' ME, CUTTIN' OFF MY AIR. I TORE AT HIS BODY, TRYIN' T' MAKE HIM LOSE HIS HOLD. AND MY HANDS CAME AWAY WITH CHUNKS OF SOFT FLESH-SMELL-



RAGS! YOU'RE NOTHING BUT CHOIN' RAGS!

THAT'S WHY I SENT YOU TO HER! SHE NEEDED MORE THAN ME! I LOVED HER...



BUT I KNEW SHE COULD NEVER LOVE A RAGMAN!

SCREEEEEEEE

SHE'S SINGIN' THAT RAG-TIME MUSIC, NO COUNT, TONY! WELL, DON'T FEEL BAD! NOW THAT YOU'RE DEAD, YOU WON'T HAVE T' DISE IT! THEY'LL DO YOU... A BRAVE, THAT IS! WELL, THERE'S... NEXT TIME YOU HEAR THE OLD EXPRESSION... 'CLOTHES MAKE THE MAN', REMEMBER THE RAGMAN! OLD CLOTHES DIDN'T IN HIS CASE! WELL, I'VE GOT TO BE SHOVELIN' OFF! HOPE YOU ENJOYED THE GRIFF-KEEPER'S NEW MORAL MUCH- WAS, WE THREE GHOULS UNITE! WE'LL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY PUPPET PERFORMA! THE HAUNT OF FEAR! TELL THEM, KEEP A STIFF...



EVERYTHIN' GOIN' RED AND BLACK NOW. I HEAR A FUNNY KIND OF MUSIC IN MY HEAD. AND LAUGHIN'... I HEAR FANNY LAUGHIN'...

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President
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BASED ON THE CLASSIC EC COMICS SERIES.



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JOHN L. LANSOALE
WRITER

JAMES ROMBERGER &
MARGUERITE VAN COOK
ARTISTS

MARK LERER
LETTERER



THE CRYPT-KEEPER

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TEROR



NO. 9
ALL-NEW!



TALES FROM THE CRYPT

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER

IN THIS ISSUE:
"CHICKEN MAN"
BY LANSDALE & ROMBERGER!



\$3.95 US

09



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

WELCOME BACK, BOORS AND GHOULS, TO THE NEW AND IMPROVED CRYPT OF TERROR FEATURING MY CAULDRON OF CHILLS! IF YOU WERE EXPECTING THE DECREPIT CRYPT-KEEPER AND THE VAGUOUS VAULT-KEEPER TO GREET YOU, THEY'RE HELPING ME COOK UP A REAL POT-BOLER FOR YOU!

»GLASPY GLUGGI
CHOKES!«

QUET!

BONK!

PESKY
INGREDIENTS! BUT
WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT
WHEN YOU'RE COOKING UP
CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE
HORROR FAN?

AND IT'S
NOT  GETTING CHICKENS!
JUST ASK WILL BENOER,
BETTER KNOWN AS...

**CHICKEN
MAN**



MY
NAME'S WILL
GENDER

I HEARD
THE VOODOO MAN
WAS IN NEED OF
SOME CHICKENS,
SO HERE I AM.



THESE
ARE THE
BEST BLEEDERS
YOU EVER SEEN
POP OFF THEIR
HEAD AND
THE BLOOD
POURS.



HOW DO I
KNOW THAT,
MAN?

I CAN'T
CHECK
WITHOUT
BLEEDING ONE
YOU WANT
ME TO DO
THAT?



TAKE MY WOOD
FOR IT I'LL SELL
YOU A DOZEN FOR A
HUNDRED DOLLARS
A PIECE.



YOU THINK NEO
STUPID, MAN? NO WAY
I PAY YOU THAT KIND OF
MONEY. I GO SEE OLD
MAN SMITH. HE SELL ME
CHICKENS FOR FIVE
DOLLARS A PIECE.



NOT ANYMORE,
I BOUGHT HIM OUT.
THESE ARE THE ONLY
LIVE CHICKENS WITHIN
A HUNDRED MILES
OF HERE.

MAYBE YOU
SHOULD HAVE
STAYED IN HAITI
-TAKE IT OR
LEAVE IT.

HA HA HA
HA HA HA

OKAY, I TAKE ALL OF THEM, MAN. MAGIC DON'T WORK WITHOUT THEM. I FIX YOU LATER.



THAT VOODOO NONSENSE DON'T WORK ANYWAY.

WE BOTH KNOW YOU'RE JUST HOODWINKING PEOPLE. I DON'T CARE THOUGH, EVERYBODY HAS TO MAKE A BUCK.



YOU KNOW NOTHING. I WOULD BE MORE CAREFUL WHAT I SAY, WILL GENDER.

YOU MAY REGRET IT. PUT THE CHICKENS ON MY TRUCK.









WHAT
YOU BEEN
UP TO,
WILL?



MAKING
A LITTLE
MONEY.

NEED A
WHOLE LOT
MORE.





BOY, I COULD USE
SOME EASY MONEY
LIKE THAT MY OLD EX-
LADY IS PUSHING ME
FOR ALIMONY.

THERE'S
MORE IF YOU
SHOT THE BACK-
BONE FOR IT. HELP
ME GET IT AND
I'LL SPLIT IT
WITH YOU.



I'M ABOUT
READY FOR ANY-
THING. THE WAY
THAT WOMAN'S
HOUNDING
ME.



I SAW THE
MONEY THIS AFTER-
NOON. YOU GOT
A GUN?

YEAH, I GOT A
GUN. THIRTY-EIGHT
MY OLD MAN
GAVE ME.

I KEEP IT HID
SO MY PAROLE
OFFICER DON'T
KNOW.





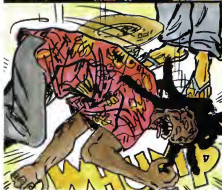








THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT
I'M GOING TO DO, IF
YOU DON'T COME UP
WITH THAT MONEY















HEHEH! AND YOU
THOUGHT THE CHICKEN
CROSSED THE ROAD JUST
TO GET TO THE OTHER
SIDE! YOU DIDN'T KNOW
ABOUT THAT AWFUL
ONE-EYED SNAKE!



WE AGREED TO LET YOU COOK
DINNER— NOT FOR US TO BE
YOUR CANNIBALISTIC CULINARY
CONCOCTION!!

HEY, I
SAID IT WOULD
BE POT LUCK!

>GASP!<
>CHOK!<



I REALLY
OUGHT TO GET
A MICROWAVE
OVEN!

WHILE THESE TWO
SIMMER AND STEW,
HERE'S A PSYCHIC
SHOCKER FOR YOU
THAT I CALL...

GLASS HEADS



GO HOME?
WHAT ARE YOU
TALKING ABOUT?
IT'S ONLY
MIDNIGHT!

FORGET IT,
CHANDLER. THOSE
OF US WITHOUT TRUST
FUNDS HAVE TO GO
TO WORK IN THE
MORNING.

YEAH,
CHANDLER.
WHEN ARE YOU
GOING TO DECIDE
THERE ACTUALLY
IS SOMETHING
YOU WANT TO
DO WITH YOUR
LIFE?



NOW THAT'S
JUST NOT FAIR.
I KNOW EXACTLY
WHAT I'M DOING FOR
AT LEAST TWELVE
HOURS OF EVERY
DAY.

OF COURSE,
THAT'S SLEEPING.
BUT...

YEEESH!
YOU'RE A
DISGRACE TO
RICH KIDS
EVERYWHERE.
YOU KNOW
THAT?



A
DISGRACE.
HUH.

THERE'S
A PURPOSE I
MIGHT ACTUALLY
BE ABLE TO GET
INTO...

YOU.

PLEASE.

A comic book panel showing a woman with blonde hair, wearing a purple dress, in a state of distress. She is crying and has her arms raised in a pleading gesture. She is surrounded by a bright, glowing blue and white aura. The background is a restaurant interior with green walls, four black pendant lights hanging from the ceiling, a brown booth with tables on the left, and several wooden tables with chairs on the right. Three speech bubbles contain her dialogue.

HELP ME.

IF YOU
CAN HEAR ME,
PLEASE, PLEASE
HELP ME.

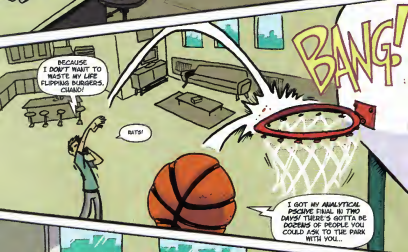
YOU ARE
THE ONLY
ONE.





'VETTE! C'MON!
THE SUN IS OUT!
THE BIRDS ARE
SINGING! IT'S APRIL
IN NEW YORK!

WHY DO
YOU WANT TO
WASTE IT IN
THE LIBRARY?



BECAUSE
I DON'T WANT TO
WASTE MY LIFE
FLIPPING BURGERS,
CHAND!

RATS!

BANG!

I GOT MY ANALYTICAL
PSYCHE FINAL IN TWO
DAYS! THERE'S GOTTA BE
DOZENS OF PEOPLE YOU
COULD ASK TO THE PARK
WITH YOU...



YEAH, BUT THEN I
WOULDN'T HAVE THE
PLEASURE OF CORRUPT-
ING THEM AWAY FROM
THEIR STUPID BORING
WORK, HEH-HEH...



ONLY
YOU CAN
HEAR ME.



ONLY
YOU CAN
HELP ME.



ONLY
YOU.

CHANDLER!

CHANDLER,
CAN YOU
HEAR ME?

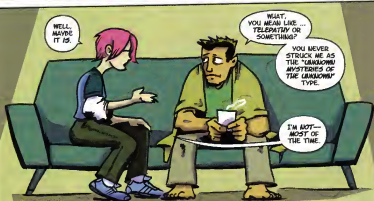


DON'T—
IF YOU CAN
HEAR ME—
DON'T
MOVE!

DON'T GO
ANYWHERE!

I'LL BE
RIGHT
OVER!





BUT MY
"ISSUES IN
PSYCHIC" CLASS
DID A WHOLE
THING ON THE
E.S.P. PROGRAM
THE SOVIETS
HAD DURING THE
SEVENTIES AND
EIGHTIES.

I MEAN,
THEY HAD SOME
OF THE TOP
SCIENTISTS IN
THE WORLD
WORKING ON IT,
AND THEY TOOK
IT SERIOUSLY.

YEAH, AND
LOOK WHAT
HAPPENED TO
THE BERLIN
WALL.



HA, HA,
ALL I'M
SAVING IS,
WHAT IF THIS
ISN'T A
VISION?

WHAT IF
THIS POOR
CHICK REALLY
IS TRYING TO
CONTACT
YOU?

IF SHE'S REAL,
THEN SHE'S IN REAL
TROUBLE, AND SHE'S
RIGHT— ONLY YOU
CAN HELP HER.



WHAT
DO YOU WANT
ME TO DO? I
ALREADY MADE
AN APPOINTMENT
TO SEE A
NEUROLOGIST—
BUT HE'S
BOOKED UP
UNTIL NEXT
WEEK.

LOOK, IF YOU
ARE... RECEIVING
THOUGHTS FROM
SOMEBODY
ELSE'S BRAIN...



...MAYBE YOU
SHOULD TRY
TRANSMITTING
SOME.

MAKE THE
CONVERSATION
TWO-WAY.





"WE BREATHE
NATURALLY, PREFERABLY
THROUGH THE NOSTRILS,
WITHOUT ATTEMPTING TO
CONTROL OUR
BREATH..."

"...AND WE
TRY TO BECOME
AWARE OF THE
SENSATION OF THE
BREATH AS IT ENTERS
AND LEAVES THE
NOSTRILS."

OKAY...



WAAAIT... I BET YVETTE AND THE
GUYS ARE ALL LAUGHING THEIR
BUTTS OFF RIGHT NOW THAT SHE
WAS ABLE TO CON ME INTO
BUYING THIS JUNK.

THIS HAS
GOT TO BE THE
DUMBEST THING
I'VE EVER
DONE...







OH NO
OH NO OH NO
OH NO

UNLESS
YOU COME
FOR ME



WAIT...
AM I... TOTALLY
LOSING IT...

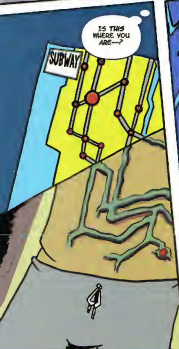
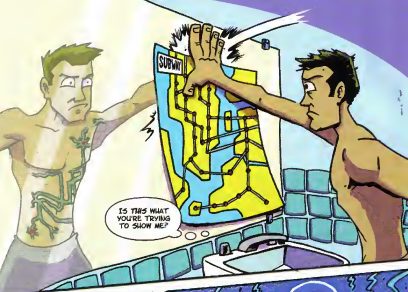
OR...
IS THAT...

... FAMILIAR---?



COME FOR
ME NOW

OHAY, OHAY,
KEEP YOUR
PANTS ON.





YVETTE'S
NOT ANSWERING
HER /B#5/ PHONE.
MY USUAL LUCK.

ALTHOUGH...
TIPS MIGHT BE A
BIT MUCH EVEN
FOR HER TO
SWALLOW.



AND...

MAYBE
THIS IS IT.



MAYBE
THIS IS ... A GIFT,
A TALENT.

WHAT I'VE BEEN
LOOKING FOR MY
WHOLE LIFE.

A PURPOSE.



HELLO?
MYSTERY GIRL?
YOU THERE?



BREAKER,
BREAKER...
COME IN, GOOD
DUDDY...

HAILING
FREQUENCIES
OPEN, BY
CENTRAL...



I'M HERE, IN
BRIGHTON BEACH,
THE NEIGHBORHOOD
WHERE YOU TOLD
ME TO GO.

BUT NOW
YOU'RE GONNA HAVE
TO GIVE SOME MORE
SPECIFICS TO...





I HAVE
TO KNOW



ANNNNGGGG-
AAAAHHH!!



YOU BETTER
BE WORTH THIS,
DREAM GIRL...

I NEVER
STUCK MY ARSE
OUT FOR ANYBODY
IN MY WHOLE LIFE...



YOU SHOULD
CONSIDER YOURSELF
LUCKY YOU FOUND
AN EXPERIENCED
JUVENILE DELINQUENT
AS YOUR TELEPATHIC
RECEIVER!

PRIVATE



HEY ...
MAYBE SHE'S A
KIDNAPPED HEIRESS
OR SOMETHING!

MAYBE THERE'LL
BE A REWARD FOR
HER RESCUE!



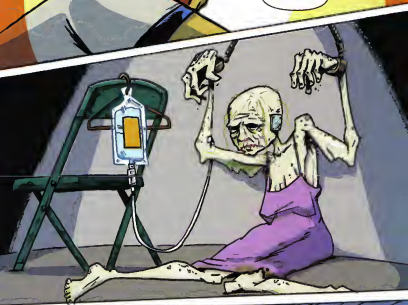
AT THE
VERY LEAST...

...I BETTER
GET A DATE
OUT OF
THIS!



HEY...
HEY, MISS?

IS THAT YOU?
IS THAT—





AAAAHH!!

AAAGHHHH--



«I HATE
THE SCREAMERS
THE MOST.»

«GRUNT»

«THAT'S ALL THE
TEST SUBJECTS DR.
KRYLOV NEEDS, DA?
WE COLLECTED THEM
IN RECORD TIME!»

«OUR
"BROADCASTER"
WORKED WONDERS,
AS USUAL.»

«IT'S AMAZING
HOW A PRETTY
FACE WILL DISARM
EVEN THE MOST
POWERFUL LATENT
TELEPATHS.»





Turns out
Chandler Wells was
just like every other
man - a sucker for a
pretty face!

Speaking of
suckers, the Crypt-keeper
and the Vault-keeper seemed
to have had some unfortunate
side effects to my cauldron's
creepy casserole!

>BBLLARGHFF!!<

While ol'
C-K is up-chucking
in his inner
sanctum—

>BLAARRRRFFF!!<

--V-K has
suddenly become
all warm and
fuzzy!

I'll get
you for this,
old witch!

If Barf-Breath is
able to get his act together
he should be ready to host his
Crypt-keeper's corner column,
featuring your countless requests
to dump him and the Vault-keeper,
and to have me take over tales
from the Crypt on a permanent
basis! Be here next issue to
see if justice prevails.



BUUUURPPP!

"Scuze me, kiddies, your ol' pal the Crypt-Keeper just had the most DREADFUL DINING experience, thanks to The Old Witch! Would you believe she made me SICK and the Vault-Keeper RAT-ATOUILLE! If she ever savives you to lunch, RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!"

Meanwhile, back at the CRYPT... we're still painfully PINCHING ourselves (don't try this at home!) over all the attention last issue's SCARY SARAH PALIN cover (drawn by Ricko "the Sicko" Parker) and CATHY GAINES MIFSUDS special editorial received!

For example, GHOULISH GEOFF (THE BUTCHER) BOUCHER of the L. A. Times wrote a GHASTLY PIECE about it, which was picked up by the Associated Press and SPLATTERED across newspapers world-wide. Geoffy wrote...

"The cover is a reference to two instances of content debate, one that played out on a national stage and the other a seemingly minor moment in Alaska that has been made major by the current political season.

"Tales from the Crypt" became one of the signature names in horror and American pop culture after five years of memoeable mayhem that ended in 1955. That was after months of intense pressure and new industry regulations targeting the lurid comics, spurred by televised Senate subcommittee hearings on juvenile delinquency and its causes.

"Palin, meanwhile, has taken heat for some overtures she made in 1996 while as mayor of Wasilla, Alaska. Criticized after reports that she sought to ban books from a local public library, the GOP candidate has said that on two occasions she asked 'a rhetorical question' about removing objectionable books from shelves, but that she never pursued it or mentioned specific titles.

"But any White House candidate who even entertains a conversation about book banning is a natural enemy to 'Tales from the Crypt,' according to Jim Salterup, editor-in-chief of Papercutz, the publisher that revived the classic title about 16 months ago. 'This was not a partisan thing. People tend to think of everything as black and white these days -- you are either for or against one of the parties 100%. But for us this was about the history of EC Comics, the original publisher of 'Tales from the Crypt.' Anyone who knows that history knows that even of whiff of banning books is going to get us angry."

Well, la-der-dah! Who knew Salterup was such a POLITICAL PUN-DIT? GRUESOME GRAEME McMILLAN writing the Political Science (Fiction) column on io9 asked 'Are Comics Part of the Left-Wing Media Conspiracy?' as well as...

"You may be wondering exactly what Sarah Palin's personal policies are, ahead of tonight's Vice Presidential Debate, and we're happy to help you with that: Apparently, she's anti-witch... or, at least, that's the message that we get from this cover from the October issue of the revived TALES FROM THE CRYPT. And, as this year's US Presidential election nears, this age previously non-partisan genre staple's move into editorializing against the Republican ticket is only one way in which comics are trying to get in on the action."



But the *bestest* **POLITICALLY INCORRECT** observation was online at *Gawker.com*, where **INSANE IAN SPIEGELMAN** wrote:

"The highlight of Sarah Palin's career? It's not her guest spot on SNL, or her scary stump speeches in front of screaming crazy racists. It's this cover for ... *Tales from the Crypt*."

But enough about that! There were two SHOCK-FILLED STORIES in TALES FROM THE CRYPT #8 as well. And while we're still tabulating the votes on which SCARE-TALE was our ROTTEN READER'S fave, we did receive a couple of RIOTOUS REACTIONS... (In the meantime, go to the TALES FROM THE CRYPT section of www.papercutz.com and vote online for your favorite story from THIS issue!)

Subject: TALES FROM THE CRYPT #8

As a long-time fan of EC Comics, I welcome the revival of **TALES FROM THE CRYPT** and the guest editorial by Cathy Gaines Mifsud.

As a long-time fan of EC Comics, it's interesting to see the return of the Ray Bradbury "Home to Stay" precedent (**WEIRD FANTASY** #13). You forgot to acknowledge Stanley G. Weinbaum's (writing as John Jesel) oft-reprinted "The Adaptive Ultimate" (originally published in *Amazing Stories*, November 1935) or its film adaptation **SHE DEVIL** (1957) as the source of "She Who Would Rule the World."

I wish you the best of luck in the future.
Leonid Doroschenko

If only we had an editor with the SCI-FI CREDITS as LEONID, then we'd really be DANGEROUS! Sadly, we're still stuck with Salicrup, and he lamely pleads that the correct credits in both TALES FROM THE CRYPT comic #8 and graphic novel # 5 should have read:

"SHE WHO WOULD RULE THE WORLD"
(BASED ON "THE ADAPTIVE ULTIMATE")
BY STANLEY G. WEINBAUM
ADAPTED BY
CHRISTIAN ZAMIER
WRITER, ARTIST, LETTERER, COLORIST,
MARVIN MARIANO
COLORIST

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

Just wanted to make a few comments about **TFTC** #8. "She Who Would Rule the World" was very well done. Both the story and the art were great. Very enjoyable. As for "Virtual Hoodoo," it was passable, but did not do much for me. One thing I found hilarious... Bart's left hand shot up from the crypt when the monsters called upon him. In and of itself, not funny. However, when you consider his left arm was ripped off by Crazy

Skeleton Man just three pages earlier... pretty funny!

In closing, I'd just like to thank you for bringing back this classic title. Also, thank you for having a letters page. The lettercol is such a great aspect of comicbooks, and so few still have them.

Sincerely,
Mark Robinson
Colorado Springs, CO

Hey, Mark, did you ever think that those other comics don't have letter columns 'cause they can't get Yours Truly to write 'em in my world-famous HORRIFIC style? Let's face it, how can they really compete with me?

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

Hello my name is Brett, I live in England, and I am a big fan of the old **TALES FROM THE CRYPT** comics and I just recently purchased number 7 of the new **TALES FROM THE CRYPT** comics. I loved it, but here in England it is hard to get hold of your comics. So how can I subscribe? And also will I be able to back order and get the first 6 issues as well as future ones.

Brett Stephenson
England

*What's the matter, Brett? Too lazy to travel to the US to get your horror comics fix? Fortunately for you there's mulehighcomics.com for back issues, and barnesandnoble.com for our **CADAVEROUS COLLECTED EDITIONS**, available in both soft and (for those who collect STIFFS...) hard covers.*

Keep those emails and letters coming - and if you've got any Pepto, we could use that too. Send letters to:

The Crypt-Keeper's Corner
40 Exchange Place, Suite 1308
New York, NY 10005

Or email your comments to the Old Editor at:
salicrup@papercutz.com

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E.C. FANS!

YOU'VE WRITTEN!
YOU'VE E-MAILED!
YOU'VE PHONED!
YOU'VE THREATENED US!
YOU'VE DEMANDED!
(BUT WE'RE COMING OUT WITH
THESE COLLECTIONS ANYWAY!)



COLLECTING STORIES BY BILGREY, CABRAL, MR.EXES, GNIEWEK,
HUDSON, KAPLAN, KLEID, LANSDALE, LOBDELL, MANNION,
MARTINEZ, MCGREGOR, MURASE, NOETH, PETRUCHA, ROMBERGER,
SIMMONS, SMITH 3, TODD, VELILLA and VOLLMAR!

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BASED ON THE CLASSIC EC COMICS SERIES.



RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO WILLIAM M. GAINES, AL FELDSTEIN,
REED CRANDALL, JOHNNY CRAIG, JACK DAVIS, WILL ELDER, GEORGE
EVANS, GRAHAM INGELS, JACK KAMEN, BERNIE KRIGSTEIN, HARVEY
KURTZMAN, JOE ORLANDO, GEORGE ROUSSOS, MARIE SEVERIN, AL
WILLIAMSON, AND WALLY WOOD.

"LITTLE DARLIN"

JOHN L. LANSDALE
WRITER

JAMES ROMBERGER &
MARGUERITE VAN COOK
ARTISTS

JAMES ROMBERGER
LETTERER



THE CRYPT-KEEPER

"HEX AND THE CITY"

STEFAN PETRUCHA
WRITER

MR. EXES
ARTIST

MARK LERER
LETTERER

GHOULUNATICS SEQUENCES

JIM SALICRUP
WRITER

RICK PARKER
ARTIST/TITLE LETTERER/COLOR

MARK LERER
LETTERER

STEVEN MANNION
COVER ARTIST

CHRIS NELSON & SHELLY DUTCHAK
PRODUCTION

MICHAEL PETRANEX
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

TERRY NANTIER



THE PUBLISHER

JIM SALICRUP



THE OLD EDITOR

Caricatures by Rick Parker.

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TERROR



NO. 11
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TALES FROM THE CRYPT



48
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FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER

WARNING!
This comicbook will
rot your brain!



\$3.95 US

11



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! BACK AGAIN, EH? BET YOU'RE WONDERING WHAT THE OLD WITCH IS DOING HERE? YOU WERE EXPECTING THE DECREPIT CRYPT-KEEPER AND HIS PARTNER-IN-SLIME THE VAULT KEEPER, RIGHT?

THE SHOCKING TRUTH IS THAT THEY'RE BOTH HERE—VICTIMS OF CRYPT-FEVER! THEY'VE TOTALLY FREAKED OUT! TOO MUCH TIME SPENT IN THE CRYPT OF TERROR WATCHING YOU TOOMBI! WORST CASE I EVER SAW! THEY EVEN HALLUCINATED SEEING ME DRESSED IN A FRENCH MAID'S UNIFORM!*

NOT TO WORRY—I'M BREWING UP A CURE RIGHT NOW! "HAVE CAULDRON—WILL TRAVEL!" THAT'S MY MOTTO!

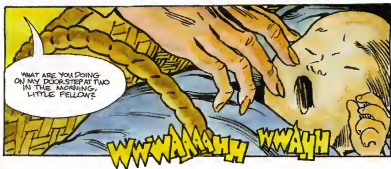
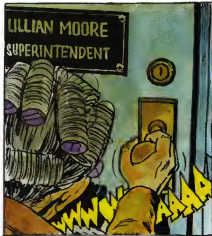
WHILE THIS SIMMERS, LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT ANOTHER LADY WHO HAD TO TAKE CARE OF A LITTLE BOY, A REGULAR...

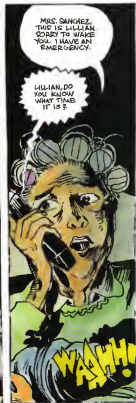
Little
DARLIN'

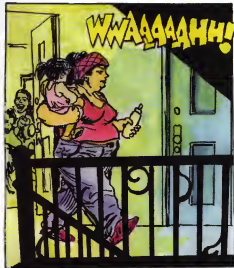
*YOU SAW IT TOO—
LAST ISSUE!







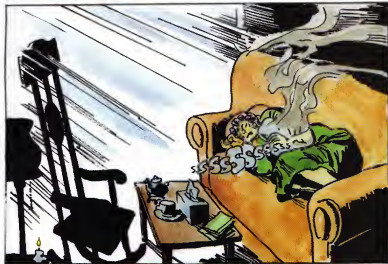


















I THOUGHT
YOU WOULD BE
GLAD I DID.

THEY WILL
TAKE HIM TO A
HOSPITAL.
CHECK HIM
OUT.



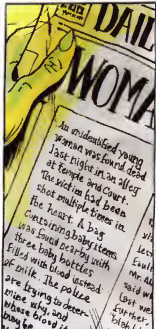
I'M SORRY.
I KNOW YOU
MEANT WELL.

EVER SINCE
ROY DIED I'VE
BEEN SO LONELY...



YOU'RE TOO
OLD TO BE TAKING
CARE OF A BABY
ANYWAY.







**KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK**



I'M MRS. WELLS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES. I UNDERSTAND SOMEONE LEFT A BABY ON YOUR DOORSTEP LAST NIGHT.



YES, THEY DID, BUT I CAN TAKE CARE OF HIM.



WHAT
HAPPENED
TO YOUR
FINGERS?

OH, IT'S
NOTHING.
COME IN.



IT SURE
IS DARK
IN HERE.

THAT'S THE WAY
I LIKE IT!



MRS. GARCIA
SAID YOU NEVER HAD
CHILDREN. YOU DON'T
KNOW HOW TO TAKE
CARE OF A BABY,



BELIEVE ME,
MRS. WELFORD...

YOU'RE THE
ONE THAT DOESN'T
KNOW HOW TO
TAKE CARE OF HIM.



MRS. MOORE,
BRING ME THE
BABY THIS
INSTANT!

I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO TAKE
MATTERS INTO MY OWN HANDS.





E.C. FANS!

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MANNION, MARTINEZ, MCGREGOR,
MURASE, NOETH, PETRUCHA,
ROMBERGER, SIMMONS, SMITH 3,
TODD, VELILLA AND VOLLMARI

#1 GHOULS DONE WILD!



#2 CAN YOU FEAR ME NOW?



#3 ZOMBELICIOUS



#4 CRYPT-KEEPING IT REAL



#5 YABBA DABBA VOODOO



#6 YOU TOOMB



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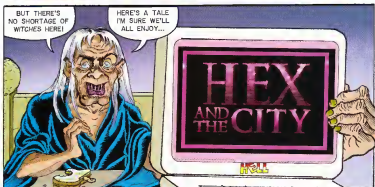


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DISCLAIMER! THIS IS NOT A COMMENTARY ON WICCAN BELIEFS, BUT A CAUTIONARY TALE OF WHAT BEFALLS THOSE WHO USE WHAT THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND FOR SELFISH ENDS!

PLEASE...
HELP ME...

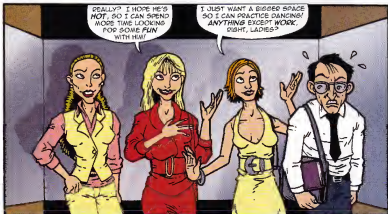
GROSS,
SOMEONE
SHOULD CALL THE
POLICE!

THE
FASHION
POLICE!

IGNORE
THEM! PEOPLE
ARE ONLY HOME-
LESS BECAUSE
THEY WANT TO BE!
JUST LIKE WE'RE
HAPPY AND PRETTY
BECAUSE THAT'S
WHAT WE
WANT!

HOWLSWORTH'S
SON TAKES OVER
TODAY! I CAN'T WAIT TO
ASK HIM FOR A PRIVATE
OFFICE SO I CAN SPEND
MORE TIME SEEKING
TRUE ROMANCE ON
THE WEB!





E-E-EXCUSE ME, BUT THERE I-I-IS MORE TO LIFE THAN LOOKING AND FEELING G-G-GOOD!





BEFORE YOU MAKE YOUR FINAL DECISION ABOUT US, THERE'S SOMETHING YOU MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER!

MAYBE WE DIDN'T WORK, BUT THERE WAS ONE THING WE DID FOR YOUR FATHER THAT MADE US WORTH **EVERYTHING** HE PAID US AND MORE!

YOU SEE, WE'RE WICCAN!

WE ARE? OH, YEAH... WE ARE!

WICCAN LIKE YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE!

AND WE PERFORMED A RITUAL THAT MADE YOUR FATHER A REAL MAN!

UH...IT'S THE REASON HE COULD WRAP ANYONE HE WANTED AROUND HIS FINGER!

VERY TIGHTLY!

YOU'D LIKE US
TO PERFORM OUR
RITUAL FOR YOU,
WOULDN'T
YOU?

UH... UH...
UH...

YES! YES!
A THOUSAND
TIMES YES!

>>> I'VE
BEEN SO LONELY!
SO AFRAID! AND MY
FATHER NEVER PAID
ANY ATTENTION
TO ME!

ALL HE EVER
GAVE ME WAS
THIS LOUSY BUSINESS!
AND I'M AFRAID OF
BUSINESSES,
TOO!



JUST TELL ME
WHAT I HAVE TO
DO AND I'LL DO
IT!



"FIRST, RENT A SECLUDED *SHACK* WHERE NO ONE CAN FIND YOU... UH... I MEAN *US*! THE RITUAL REQUIRES *POWER SENS*, BUT A RICH GUY LIKE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO AFFORD THEM! NEXT..."

NICE TOUCH FINDING THESE OLD HALLOWEEN COSTUMES!

BUT WHAT ABOUT THIS RITUAL?

AH, I FOUND SOME *BOBIS* CEREMONY ONLINE CALLED *DRAWING DOWN THE MOON*. BUT AS LONG AS WE'RE DANCING AROUND, HE'LL DO WHATEVER WE SAY!

READY TO DRAW DOWN THE MOON, HAND-SOME?

OH, Y-Y-YEAH!

AT THE HEIGHT OF THE RITUAL, YOU'LL HAVE TO DRINK THIS AND SAY THE WORDS I TAUGHT YOU!

"GREAT GOD CERNUNNOS, RETURN TO EARTH AGAIN.
COME AT MY CALL AND SHOW THYSELF TO MEN,
SHEPHERD OF GOATS, UPON THE WILD HILLS WAY,
LEAD THY LOST FLOCK FROM DARKNESS UNTO DAY."

DRINK AND
BREAK!



CHUS-A-LUS!
CHUS-A-LUS!
CHUS-A-LUS!

>BULP-BULP-
BULP!<

I AM THE
POWER!

I AM
THE HORNED
GOD!



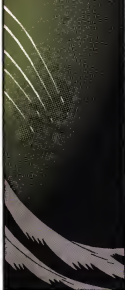
I AM...



...NOT FEELING
SO GOOD...



THUD!



THESE SUCKERS ARE
WORTH A MILLION AT
LEAST!

WE CAN START OUR OWN
BUSINESS WE WON'T HAVE
TO WORK FOR!



HE'S GETTING
UP! GET SOMETHING
TO WHACK HIM
WITH!

URGGG



AK-AK-AK!

EW! I HOPE
HE DOESN'T
PUKE!





WHO SUMMONS
THE HORNED GOD?

WHOSE WISHES
SHALL I FILL TO
BURSTING?



YOUR MIND AND BODY ARE NOW A
WRITHING WOUND THAT PULSES TO
THE COSMIC BEAT OF HUNGER'S
HEART!



BEHOLD!
YOU
ARE PART OF THE
DANCE OF THE
REAL!

AND YOU WHO WANTED
ONLY *PHYSICAL* PLEASURE,
WHERE SHALL WE
BEGIN?

YOUR FORM HAS A
BILLION NERVE ENDINGS FOR
FEELING PLEASURE, WHY NOT
SET THEM ALL *AF-FLAME* AT
ONCE?

HELP!

HELLPPP!

NO, I CAN'T
JUST LEAVE!

NOOOOOOOOOO!

NOT
WITHOUT THE
SEMS!

AND WHAT
WAS IT YOU
WANTED?

OH, NOTHING!
I'M GOOD!

ROMANCE!
THE SWOONING
MAJESTY THAT
MAKES THE WORLD
GO ROUND!

NO, REALLY,
THANKS, BUT...

I CAN GIVE
YOU MORE THAN
THE WORLD!

I CAN GIVE
YOU THE MOON
AND THE STARS!

"SHALL WE START
WITH THE MOON?"

IT'S NOT
POSSIBLE!

WITH LOVE
ALL THINGS ARE
POSSIBLE!

SHALL WE
KISS THE KISS OF
LOVE'S MADNESS?
SHALL WE KISS THE
KISS OF FOREVER?



BUT I
ALSO PROMISED
YOU THE *STARS*.
DIDN'T I?



THE COLD,
UNCARING
STARS?



SURROUNDED
BY AN INFINITE
BLACKNESS AS DARK
AS YOUR OWN BLACK
HEART!

YIEEEEE!

"AND FINALLY, YOU'LL
NEVER HAVE TO WORK
AGAIN."

CAN YOU
BELIEVE THREE JOBS
OPENED AT THE SAME
COMPANY AT THE SAME
TIME? AND WE GOT
THEM?

WE'LL BE
TOGETHER!

IT'S LIKE
I ALWAYS SAY:
LADIES, WISH HARD
ENOUGH AND YOU'LL
GET IT!



AND THE
HOMELESS ARE ONLY
THERE BECAUSE THAT'S
WHERE THEY WANT
TO GO!

PLEASE-
PLEASE-

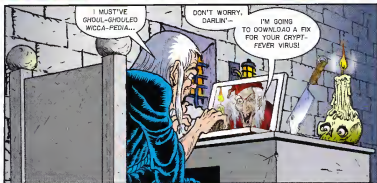
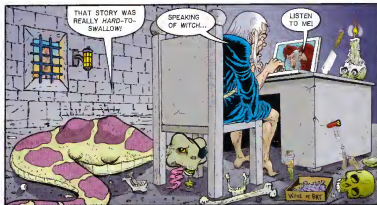




CAN'T WAIT
TO MEET THE
NEW OWNER!

I HEAR
HE'S TOTALLY
HOT!

PLEASE...



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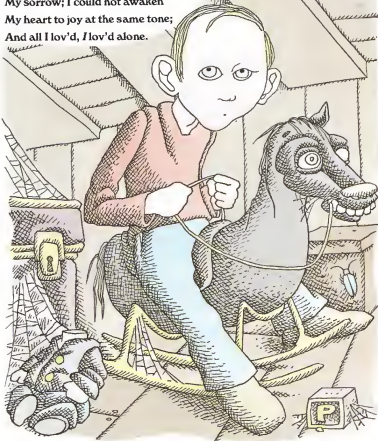
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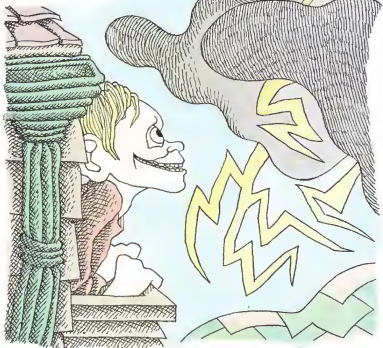
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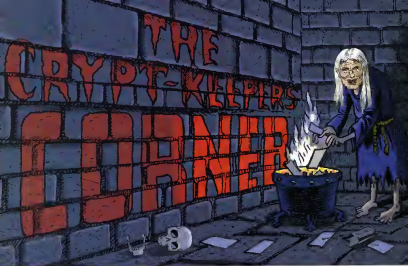
ALONE

From childhood's hour I have not been
As others were—I have not seen
As others saw—I could not bring
My passions from a common spring.
From the same source I have not taken
My sorrow; I could not awaken
My heart to joy at the same tone;
And all I lov'd, I lov'd alone.



Then— in my childhood— in the dawn
Of a most stormy life— was drawn
From ev'ry depth of good and ill
The mystery which binds me still:
From the torrent, or the fountain,
From the red cliff of the mountain,
From the sun that 'round me roll'd
In its autumn tint of gold—
From the lightning in the sky
As it pass'd me flying by—
From the thunder and the storm,
And the cloud that took the form
(When the rest of Heaven was blue)
Of a demon in my view.





The Old Witch is right! The Vault-Keeper and I have been spending too much time keeping Vaults and Crypts, and not enough time keeping SANE! Maybe it's from too much contact with our INSANE EC Fan-Addicts! Or watching too much You Toomb? Well, despite the great risk to my mental health, it's time once again to present your CRAZY COMMENTS and INSANE INSIGHTS!

Although, now that MY sanity is in question, how do I know that these are really YOUR letters? Or in the case of our ONLINE READER'S POLL, how do I know these are really the correct results? Well, outside of a quick crossover with the thrinks from PSYCHOANALYSIS, there's no way to test my state of mind at the moment, so let's just live DANGEROUSLY, and accept whatever comes our way!

According to our PUTRID POLL, "Brain Food" by Rob Vollmar and Tim Smith 3 won an overwhelming 61% of your votes, leaving "Murder M.A.I.D.," by Greg Farshtey and Mr. Exes, a paltry 39% of the vote. That's actually rather SHOCKING when you consider that Mr. Farshtey is the writer of the

BIONICLE graphic novels, the biggest-selling series from Papercutz! Perhaps we should've mentioned that Murder M.A.I.D. was actually the SEVENTH TOA? Or maybe I'm hallucinating again?

To vote for your fave FEAR-Y TALE from the issue you now grasp in your FETID FINGERS, just go to www.papercutz.com, find the TALES FROM THE CRYPT section, and click on this issue's cover to vote for your favorite story from this issue! Oh, and it really helps if you have one of those computer machines to get online.

And don't PANIC or get MAD if you somehow missed a TERROR-FILLED issue of the TALES FROM THE CRYPT comicbook, you can still find the same scary stories collected in equally scary, but albeit smaller-sized paperback and hardcover editions, available from booksellers everywhere! TALES FROM THE CRYPT Graphic Novel #6 "You Toomb" is on sale now, and features all your favorite BRAIN-EATING MONSTERS, VODOO HITMEN, KILLER ROBOTS, and BABY VAMPIRES! But if you're looking for FIENDISH FANS, here they are...

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I have a new story for you on TV. It's a nasty tale about a boy who likes to draw horror pictures and put them on the wall. One day his pictures begin to come alive. I call it "The Wall of Horror."

Love Your #1 Fan,
Tony Chavez

We've established that I may be even CRAZIER than usual, so keep that in your tiny minds when I UNOFFICIALLY ANNOUNCE that there's an all-new TV movie in the works based on TALES FROM THE CRYPT. It's being created especially for our younger fans, so you BLOOD-THIRSTY GEEZERS will just have to stick with the reruns of the HBO series on the CHILLER channel! But if enough of you BOILS and GHOULS watch the all-new TV movie, an all-new TV series starring me, the ORIGINAL Crypt-Keeper could be in your future!

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I loooovve the new TALES FROM THE CRYPT series! Cool cover on issue #10. I also have a request. Can you reprint some of the old TALES FROM THE CRYPT stories in your new mag? And try to make your stories kind of like the old ones. Keep up with the stories of monsters! But please, no art like the art in issue #9, the story "Chicken Man." Again, try to make the stories more horror-science fiction, if you know what I mean. Anyway, keep up the gruesome work!

Your Fan,
Jared Hershman, Age 10

Well, Jared, if you want us to keep up the "gruesome work" then we gotta keep using James Romberger! We're sorry you weren't thrilled (and chilled) by his art on "Chicken Man" but so many others were - including fellow CRYPT-contributors John L. Lansdale and Rick "the Sicko" Parker!

Subject: TALES FROM THE CRYPT

This stuff is great. I remember reading reprints of the originals back in the '80's, so as a 35 year-old reader that came across this new series, I absolutely love it. I just love the tales and I can't get enough. I finish each book thirsting for more. I just read #1 and #2 and have read about your plans for CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED, which I think is great. Keep up the good work!

A fan,
Steven Ortiz

Speaking of ROTTING REPRINTS, Steven, in case you were UNAWARE, all the original issues of TALES FROM THE CRYPT are being collected in a series of great, big, full-color hardcover volumes by Gemstone Publishing. But there's a particular Jack Davis-drawn tale that we may be including in one of our upcoming Paperclutz collections. All we can say now is that it may be the most requested CRYPT tale of all (by me)! Stay tuned!

And what better way to stay tuned to the CRYPT OF TERROR than to subscribe?

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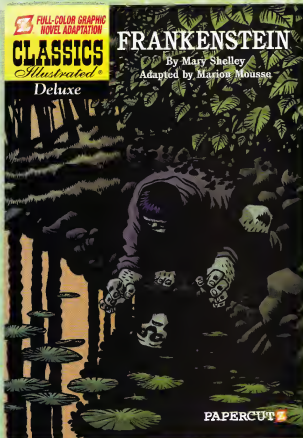
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The Crypt-Keeper's Corner
40 Exchange Place, Suite 1308
New York, NY 10005

Or email your comments to the Old Editor at:
salicrup@paperclutz.com

And if any of you are licensed psychiatrists, let me know if I'm NUTS or not!

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